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JOE LARSON



AS A

SLIGHT, BUT SINCERE EXPRESSION OF GRATITUDE,

AS A TOKEN OF RESPECT FOR INTEGRITY AND FIRMNESS

IN THE CAUSE OF HISTORICAL RESEARCH,

AS A MARK OF ESTEEM FOR NOBILITY OF PURPOSE

IN ALL THE LESSER AND LESS-FREEDOM PATHS OF LIFE,

THE AUTHOR

DEDICATES THIS BOOK TO HIS FRIEND,

WILBUR C. BROCKUNTER.

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INTRODUCTION.

Had some things been different from what they were, I believe that I could have made the History of Tucker County better than it is. The labor required to collect and arrange the material was greater than would be supposed by one who has never undertaken a task of similar nature. No previous history, covering the period and territory, has ever been compiled, and I had to enter upon original and unexplored fields wherever I went. There was no scarcity of subject-matter; but, at times, it was not easy for me to decide what to use and what to reject. I am not certain that I have not erred seriously in one thing—that I trusted more to the whims of others than to my own judgment. The plan of the work would have been quite different had I followed my own inclination to make the whole thing one connected story instead of biographical fragments, as it is. Yet, as it is, it will please more people than it would if cast in the mold for which it was first intended. I was not writing it for myself, but for others; and, as my tastes and fancies differ from those of others, I thought it best to suit the book to those for whom it was intended.

But, as I said, if some things had been otherwise, this book might have been better. The circumstances under which the work was done were not at all times pleasant or favorable. I commenced it in 1881, and devoted to it only what time was mine after devoting twelve hours a day to school work. At first it was my intention to publish it in the *Tucker County Pioneer*, as a serial story; but this was abandoned when it was seen how unwise it was. The his-

and about them there would have been a completeness which I am conscious that they do not now possess. But it is not necessary to speculate upon such things as might have been. The book is as it is, and those who feel troubled at the discovery of logical errors may, if they will, let charity cover what is best concealed. It is not my intention to undertake another task of the kind, so I cannot truthfully promise to profit by irregularities that may be pointed out. But, from this, it should not be inferred that I look upon my labor as that much thankless drudgery. Far from it. The people of Tucker County have lent their aid and encouragement to me, and have done what they could to assist me, and, on their account, if for nothing else, the work, in spite of its many discouragements and difficulties, has been to me a pleasing one. No person feels a deeper and kindlier interest in the majestic mountains, the quiet valleys, the green meadows, the blooming orchards, the sweeping streams and the crystal springs of our little county, than I do. The interests of the people are mine, and their hopes and aspirations are in unison with my sympathy. The whole county, from the wind-swept crags of the Alleghanies to the sugar-bloom of the Seven Islands, is throbbing with the pulse of universal life. The past with its romance is lost in the present, and the present is newer and beautifuller than the past ever was. Who would not feel a pride in such a county? If I have done anything for it in the present undertaking, I am glad of it; if I have done nothing, I am sorry, for I have not done my duty.

Some of the history has been wholly neglected or only touched, because I could not utilize it all. What I have left has been principally romances that cling around old memories. I would like to fling history aside and cast my

tory as it was then was less than half as largo as now, although it devoted more space to the guerrilla warfare that was carried on along our county's borders during the Civil War. When the idea of publishing it in the newspaper was abandoned, it was next proposed to bring it out in book form, and the first half-dozen pages were actually set in type. But, I was not pleased with it, and concluded to rearrange the whole work, and the printing was accordingly suspended until the writing should be completed.

Meanwhile, I found it necessary to give some attention to other matters; for, it has never been my fortune to be so situated that I could devote my whole time to literary work. Soon, too, I grew doubtful if it was worth while to do anything further with the matter. So, it was allowed to lie idle, while I found more agreeable employment in other fields of history. Thus, nothing was done till the winter of 1883-4. I was then in California, and had done as much on a new history ("Conquest of the Ohio Valley") as I could do without a personal visit to the Library at Washington City, and, as I was not yet ready to return to the East, I began to consider whether it would not be a good opportunity to revise the musty manuscripts of the Tucker History. I was the more inclined to do this because I did not like the idea of having commenced a thing without finishing it. So, I sent to West Virginia for the manuscript and revised it by the time I was ready to start home, in April, 1884. Upon my arrival at home, I added the part embraced in "Brief Biographies," and sent the book to the press late in August.

If I had quieted myself to this task, and had nothing else to lead my mind off or to disturb me, I could have done better. I could have better interwoven the stories, one with another, and made of them one continued purpose,

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lot with them for a season. No mountain of Scotland has echoed to the themes of more beautiful legends than our mountains have. The temptation to me was great as I was writing the history, for I wanted to turn myself loose among such landscapes and people and stories as my fancy could create or my eyes could see already created. But I held steadily before my mind the fact that I was writing history, and I did all I could to weed from it what was not sober and true. I have given nothing that I do not believe to be the truth. I am able to rid myself of all partiality when it is necessary to do so, and in this case I have done it. I feel that I have done injustice to none. If I have, it was unintentional on my part. It has been necessary to write of some who are anything but my personal friends; but I have done it without one shadow of desire to do them a wrong or to let them suffer by neglect. All I could ask of any man is to be treated as fairly as I have treated my characters in this History of Tacker County. I hold that no man should be misrepresented; but, if misrepresentations be tolerated, it is better that they affect the dead than the living. I would rather harm the memory of a dead Washington, although he was my friend, than to take a mean advantage of a living enemy—to injure him in a manner wherein he could not defend himself. Whether right or wrong, thus I believe.

To those who will read this book closely enough to notice errata, where they exist, I would say, bear in mind that the book was written in fragmentary parts, and did not receive the supervision that all histories should have. However, I feel confident that the serious errors are few, and what they are, they are there without the knowledge of the author at this hour.

HU MAXWELL.

Kingwood, October 28, 1884.

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HISTORY OF TUCKER COUNTY.

CHAPTER I.

JAMES PARSONS.

TUCKER COUNTY, West Virginia, is bounded on the north by Preston, on the east by Maryland and Grant County; on the south it is bounded by Randolph, and on the west by Barbour. It lies along the valley of Cheat River, and includes the tributaries of that stream for about thirty-five miles north and south, and twenty east and west. The area of the county would, therefore, be about seven hundred square miles; but, if an actual measurement were made, the area would probably fall a little short of these figures.

The county is not mentioned in history prior to the French and Indian War, about 1762. Of course, it is understood that when the county is spoken of in this manner, reference is had only to the territory now included in the county of Tucker. The territory so considered appears to have been unknown to civilized man till about the year 1762 or 1763. The accounts of the earliest explorations

sign of turning. He became convinced that he was on the wrong river, as indeed he was. The first river followed by him was the Buckhannon. At its mouth he came to the Valley River, and down it he had traveled in hopes that it would conduct him to Moorefield.

As soon as he was satisfied that he was on the wrong river, he left it and turned eastward across the mountains. He passed Laurel Ridge somewhere near the head of Clover Run, and came to Cheat above the Holly Meadows, probably near the farm of Ward Parsons, Esq. He concluded that this must certainly be the South Branch, and followed down it. When he reached the Horse Shoe Bottom he was struck with the beauty of the country, and noticed in particular the great forest of white oak trees that covered the whole bottom land of the river from the Holly Meadows to the mouth of Horse Shoe Run. The trees were nearly all of the same size, and there was little underbrush.

Up to this time he had thought that the river must be the South Branch; but, now he began to doubt it. It was too large. Already it was larger than the Branch was at Moorefield; and, he knew that he must still be far above that town; because no country like that in which he then was could be found near his home. He knew that, if it was the South Branch at all, he was above the mouth of both the North and South Forks, or upon one of those rivers. Neither was half as large as Cheat at the Horse Shoe. Therefore, he was certain that he was not on a tributary of the Potomac. He was confirmed in this conviction when he had passed round the high point of land, where Judge S. E. Parsons now resides, and saw that the river, instead of continuing toward the north-east, broke away toward the west, and flowed in that direction as far as he could see.

are vague and conflicting, and very few positive statements can be made on the subject. However, it is certain that both Preston and Randolph were visited by white men before Tucker was.

Probably the first white man in the county was Captain James Parsons, who then lived on the South Branch of the Potomac, near Moorefield, in the present county of Hardy. During the French and Indian War, the Indians often passed from beyond the Ohio, across the Alleghany Mountains, into the settlements on the Potomac River, and particularly on the South Branch. They killed or carried away as prisoners everybody they could catch. On one of these raids they captured Capt. James Parsons.* They carried him with them all the way to Ohio, and kept him a prisoner for some time. At length, however, he managed to escape from them and set out for home. He knew that the South Branch was in the east, and he traveled in that direction. He guided his course by the sun by day and the moon by night. But, as it was often cloudy, he wandered at times from his way. In this manner he proceeded many days, and from the length of time that he had been on the road, he thought that he must be near the South Branch. He struck a small river, which he thought to be the South Branch, because it flowed in an easterly direction. He followed it until it emptied into a larger river, which flowed north. This stream he followed, thinking it might be a branch of the Potomac, flowing in this direction to pass around a mountain, and that it would turn east and south again in the course of a few miles. With this impression he followed it. But it did not turn east, and showed no

* It is now a question whether it was Parsons or another man. The best authorities say Parsons.

When Captain Parsons crossed the river at the mouth of Horse Shoe Run, it was with the intention of continuing toward the east. This he did. He pursued his way up the stream a little distance, when he came upon a large, old path. It was perhaps an old Indian trail; or it might have been made by animals. Parsons would have followed this; but, it turned to the north, and he left it. At the mouth of Lead Mine, he left Horse Shoe Run; and, by going up Lead Mine, he crossed the Backbone Mountain near Fairfax.

This path across the mountain was the route by which nearly all of the first settlers of Tucker found their way into the county. After crossing the mountain, Parsons struck the North Branch of the Potomac, and finally reached home. Of the Horse Shoe Bottom he gave an account that filled the settlers about Moorefield with longings to see it. But, it was several years before any of the people from the South Branch again visited the Cheat River lands.

At that time there was a large fort at the mouth of the Monongahela River, where Pittsburgh now stands. In 1761, four of the soldiers who garrisoned the fort became dissatisfied and deserted. They passed up the Monongahela, and at the place where Geneva, Penn., now stands, they made them a camp. But, they did not like the place, and moved into Preston County, and made them another camp not far from Anrora. No one then lived anywhere near them, and for a year they saw no trace of human, except themselves. But, at length, one of them found a path leading south-east. He thought that it must go to Virginia, and he hurried back to camp and told his companions that they ought to follow the path and see where it would lead. They were all willing for this, and at once set out to trace

He could not divine where he was. He knew of no river of this kind anywhere in the west. For the first time, in all his wanderings, he became confused, and knew not where to go next. He would have followed down the river, in the hope that it would lead him to some settlement; but, he felt sure that it must empty into the Ohio.

After pondering over the matter for some time, he resolved to continue his eastward course. He saw a long valley extending east; and, crossing the river, he was at the mouth of Horse Shoe Run. As far as is known, he was the first white man ever in Tucker County. However, there is a tradition that a band of Indians, with a prisoner, once halted at the mouth of Horse Shoe Run; and, leaving their prisoner tied on the bank of the river, they went up the run after the lead. In a few hours they returned with some. Whether this event, if it happened at all, was before or after Captain Parsons was there, cannot now be determined. One account says that the prisoner was Captain Parsons' brother Thomas. But, all accounts of the subject are vague and conflicting. If the Indians got lead in that manner, it was probably some that they had hidden on a previous expedition. There are not known to be any lead mines in that vicinity; although some people think there are. It was a custom among the Indians, when they went upon an expedition, to hide lead along the road so that, upon their return, they might have a supply without carrying it with them during the whole journey. This is likely why they went up the run to get that article, at the time mentioned. This probability is strengthened by the fact that an old Indian war path crossed Cheat River at the mouth of Horse Shoe Run; and, if lead were left anywhere, it would likely be along a path.

began to be settled, five or six years later. The Pringles likewise crossed to the Valley River, and ascending it to the mouth of the Buckhannon, passed up that river to the mouth of Turkey Run, in Upshur County, where they made a camp in a hollow sycamore tree.

We have no account of any other persons visiting Tucker for some years. The only occupants were wild animals that filled the woods, or wild Indians who occasionally roamed up and down the valleys. It is possible that Simon Kenton was on the river at the Horse Shoe in the summer of 1771. He had had a fight with a man in Virginia, and thought he had killed him. He fled westward and reached Cheat River. It may have been at the Horse Shoe; but, more probably it was in Preston County. At that time, Kenton was only sixteen years old. He afterwards went to Kentucky and became one of the most illustrious characters in all border history.

When first visited by white men, there were no Indians who made the territory of Tucker their permanent home. If they came within it at all, it was only to pass through, or to hunt for game. Many people hold quite erroneous ideas concerning the Indians who used to kill people and do all manner of wickedness in West Virginia. Some suppose that they lived all over the valleys and mountains like bears and panthers, and in an unguarded moment would run into a settlement, murder all the people they could catch, and then retreat to the woods, and skulk about through the brush like wild animals until a chance came of killing somebody else. This was not the case. No Indians have made Tucker County their home, so far as is known, since before Columbus. Undoubtedly, they once lived here; but they had long been gone when first the white man

the path. It is not now known who made the path or where it led to and from. But, the deserters followed it until it conducted them to Luney's Creek, in Grant County. Here they stumbled upon a frontier settlement; for, the whites were just then colonizing the upper part of the South Branch, and the adjacent valleys. This was near where Seymoursville now stands, and was not more than fifteen miles from where Captain Parsons lived, near Moorefield.

This was in the vicinity of Fort Pleasant, where Dr. Eckarly, from Preston County, had been arrested on suspicion, some six or eight years before. They suspected that he was a spy from the Indians. The South Branch was evidently a bad place for suspected characters. At any rate, the four deserters from Pittsburgh had been there but a short time when they were arrested as deserters. However, two of them, brothers named Pringle, made their escape, and ran back to their camp in the glades of Preston.

In the course of a few months, a straggler named Simpson found his way to their camp, and remained with them. By this time, hunters from the South Branch began to hunt frequently in the glades of Preston; and the deserters felt insecure. They determined to move further west. Simpson agreed to accompany them. The three men broke up their camp near Aurora, and took their way down Horse Shoe Run. At its mouth, they crossed into the Horse Shoe. After they had crossed the river, they fell to quarreling. The two Pringles took sides against Simpson, and drubbed him off to himself. He crossed to the Valley River. Not liking the country, he passed on to Harrison County, and, not far from Clarksburg, built him a camp. He made that locality his permanent home until the country about him

terious race, which built the ten thousand mounds and fortifications in the Ohio and Mississippi valleys; but, no man knows whence they came, when they came, how long they remained or when or why they left, or whether they were white or black, or what was their religion or their laws, or who they were. However, it is tolerably well established that they ceased to be a people in the United States at least nine hundred years ago. Indeed, from all the evidence in the case, one is nearly obliged to believe that the mounds of the west are as old as the Tower of Babel.

It is not certain that the Moundbuilders ever lived in Tucker; but, there is a little ground for attributing to them the small mound in the Horse Shoe, on the farm of S. B. Wamsley, Esq. The mound in question is about forty feet in circumference and four or five high. It is on the first terrace above the river. It may be the work of Indians; but, it is more probably the remains of the Moundbuilders, who had their center of empire in Ohio, and extended their frontiers over nearly all the land of the Mississippi Valley, east of Texas and Kansas. Nobody knows what the mounds were built for. They were constructed of earth and loose stones, sometimes of sand, and occasionally fragments of wood were found in them. Some of the structures seem to have been used for fortifications, some as churches, or rather temples, and some may have been built as tombs for great men. But, this is not a settled point. In some of them, altars with charred human bones among ashes have been found. This suggests that the Moundbuilders offered human sacrifice to their idols, as the Mayas and people of Mexico did. Some think it probable that the Moundbuilders were originally a colony from Mexico. Skeletons in the mounds have led some persons to conclude that the

came; and nothing but graves, remnants of arrows and other implements, found scattered about the ground, told that they had ever made this part of the valley of Cheat their home. Nor was the land between the Ohio River and the Alleghany Mountains, now West Virginia, the country of Indians at the coming of the whites. A few scattered huts and two or three little towns were all that our state contained of the living Indian race. But, in earlier times, they had lived here, as their remains now prove; and there is reason for believing that the country was tolerably thickly inhabited. Why they deserted the land, or what became of them, is a question that none now can answer. It is useless to put out theories on the subject. Of all specimens of human weakness, a mere theory, unsupported by evidence, deserves most to be pitied. We know that there was a time when West Virginia and Tucker County had inhabitants, and we know that those inhabitants were Indians; but further than this, nothing is certain. What became of the tribes—whether they departed for a better country, or whether they were exterminated by some stronger nation, or whether some plague carried them off—we do not pretend to say. Any opinion on the subject is only guesswork, because no man knows.

It is not theory, however, to say that before West Virginia was inhabited by the Indians, there was another race of people living here. They are called *Moundbuilders*, because they usually built mounds in countries where they lived. There may have been Indians here before the Moundbuilder came, and there certainly were after he departed, but, there is no evidence that the two races occupied the same country at the same time. A thousand theories are extant concerning the origin and fate of that mys-

bone, also enormous, is reported to have been pulled out of the river bank at the same place. The bone was said to have been so long that when stood on the ground beside a man it reached up under his arms. This magnitude was probably due to excited fancy, like that possessed by the Indian, who returned from traveling and reported that he had seen a race of men whose ears hung down to their hips.

The Moundbuilders must have been an agricultural people; because, a population as dense as theirs could not have lived in any other manner. Then, it is probable that the Horse Shoe was, long years ago, farmed something after the manner that it is now. But, the ancient people have left no trace that they had horses, oxen, any iron or steel tools or any kind of machinery, except such as they could make of wood, shells, stone and copper. But, whether or not the river bottom, from the Holly Meadows to St. George, was once a thriving settlement, and corn fields covered it from one end to the other, yet when the first white men visited it, it showed no sign of ever having been tilled. Nothing but the little mound, above referred to, is left to tell that the Moundbuilders ever lived; and, this mound is not conclusive evidence of the presence of that ancient race.

But, one thing is certain: Tucker County was once the home of Indians. The Indians of America seem to have belonged to one general race, the same as the people of Europe belong to one. The Indians are divided into numerous tribes, nations, families and confederations. These differ in language and customs. How the Indians got to America is unknown; and it is only wasting time to offer theories upon the subject. There is about as much reason for believing that the old world was peopled from the new as that the new was colonized from the old. Each continent may have

mounds were built for tombs. It would be as reasonable to conclude that a stack of hay was built for a rat because a rat's nest was found in it. Yet, doubtless, some mounds are only the huge graves of kings. But, no doubt, very many of the bones and relics found in mounds and hastily attributed to the Moundbuilders, are only the old carcasses of Indians, and Indian whimwhams. It is a known fact that the Indians often buried their dead in the mounds.

Although many of the relics taken from the mounds are counterfeit, yet some are surely genuine. From these we learn that the Moundbuilders were not much larger or much smaller than the average Indians. The accounts of skeletons of giants thirty feet long, dug out of the ground, are not to be believed. It is doubtful if a race of people, much larger than able-bodied Englishmen of to-day, has ever been in existence.

The mound in the Horse Shoe is known to have been the burial place of human beings; but, it is not known that it was built for that purpose. Ground-hogs that dig their holes in it, used to throw out pieces of human bones. But, this is no evidence that the bones were from the skeletons of Moundbuilders. In fact, there are many reasons for believing that they were Indian bones. An old Indian village stood on the bank of the river, less than a mile above the mound. Indian skeletons have been found in other places about the river, and there is no reason why they may not have buried some in this mound, as they did in other mounds whenever they had an opportunity of doing so. In early days, the river used to wash bones from its bank, where stood the village. Captain Parsons and Samuel Bonfield once found a jaw bone so large that it could be placed in position on the outside of their faces. A thigh

educated Indian, wrote a book about the Indians, and said that many tribes wanted the Monongahela valley, and not being able to agree, they held a council and decided that all should leave it. But, this story is not to be credited. Cusick did not know any more about it than he had read in books or had fabricated himself. The Indians knew no more of their history than the white people knew—not as much, for that matter.

The Indians who killed people in West Virginia generally came from Ohio; but, some came from Pennsylvania and Indiana. Ohio was full of Indians. They had towns on the Muskingum, Tuscarawas, Hockhocking, Scioto, Sandusky, Maumee, Miami and all through the intervening country. The meanest Indians were those on the Sandusky and Scioto. During the winter they did not often bother the settlements; because they were too lazy to provide themselves clothes to keep them from freezing in cold weather, and had to lie in their huts by the fire. But, as soon as the spring came and the weather began to get warm, they crawled from their dens, and fixed up their guns, knives and tomahawks for a raid upon the settlements. They traveled about twenty miles a day, unless in a hurry. If they set out from the Scioto River on the first of May, they would reach the Ohio somewhere between Point Pleasant and Wheeling in from four to seven days. They would cross that river on a raft of logs, and if they were aiming for Cheat River they would reach it in from four to seven days longer, provided they did not stop on the way.

When they came into a settlement they would hide in fence corners and in brier thickets until they saw a chance of killing somebody. Then they would leap out and sieze their victim. They sometimes killed and sometimes carried

had a people indigenous to itself. The Esquimaux of Alaska and the Siberians are known to cross and re-cross Behring Strait, and America may have received its inhabitants from Asia in that manner. The islands of Polynesia are known to be sinking. Some of them are believed to have sunken ten thousand feet, so that the islands now above water are only the mountains and table lands of a submerged continent extending from the coast of Asia nearly or quite to that of America. Indians may have come from that continent to America. The Telegraph Plateau, from New Foundland to Ireland, has the appearance of an isthmus that once connected Europe and America. It is now under water, but so near the surface that icebergs lodge on it. This may have been the Island of Atlantis that some of the old heathen writers say was swallowed up in an earthquake. If so, the tribes of America may have come from Europe.

It is useless to speculate on this. It can be proven with equal conclusiveness that the Indians are mixed with Welsh, Japanese, Norwegians, Jews and Carthagenians. It is unknown where they came from or who they were before they came. We take them as we find them.

What tribe inhabited Tucker County is not known. Jefferson says that it was the Massawomee. It may have been; and for all the difference, we may consider that it was. They were gone when first the white man came, and nothing but graves and other relics told that they were ever here.

We cannot tell why they departed from this part of the State; but, they all, except a few little towns, left for some country unknown to us. We cannot tell why they abandoned the country. War may have exterminated them, or they may have gone to occupy a better land. Cusick, an

weeds that grow larger there than on the adjacent lands. This is the place that the bones are washed out of the bank. On the other side of the river, one mile above St. George, are numerous Indian graves. It used to be reported that there were five hundred graves within half a mile; but the writer took the pains to count them, and could not find more than forty-six. They are rude heaps of stone, and extend along the side of the hill in an irregular manner. Some of them have been opened. Nothing was ever found in them. They are probably very old. An old account says that a battle was fought there between two tribes of Indians; but there is not a shadow of foundation for the story, except the graves. Why so many Indians should have been buried so near together is hard to account for, unless they were killed in battle, or by some other violent means. But this does not prove that a battle was fought. Probably there was a town near, and this was the graveyard.

The Indians used arrows tipped with flint. Many of these flints are found scattered about the country. Where the Indians got the material from which they made them is now unknown. The making of the arrow points was a profession among the Indians. They had men who made it a business. One of these factories is believed to have been situated on Horse Shoe Run, where R. Maxwell's barn now stands. When the ground was first plowed it was covered with bits of flint and broken points, and everything indicated that a shop for manufacturing flint points had formerly been there.

The French and Indian War closed in 1764. After that, came a wonderful immigration to the West. West Virginia and Kentucky were the main points to which settlers flocked. West Virginia was soon spotted all over with col-

away as prisoners those whom they could catch. If they carried a prisoner off, they would tie his hands and make him walk between two warriors. If they had plenty to eat, they gave the prisoner plenty; but if their provisions were scarce, they gave him very little. When they got him to Ohio they sometimes turned him loose in a field, and all the Indians got after him with clubs and rocks and pounded him to death. Sometimes they tied him to a tree and burnt him; and sometimes they adopted him into their tribe and treated him well. A prisoner never knew what fate awaited him, and always tried to escape.

But, the Indians always watched so close that a prisoner seldom got away. It was an unlucky thing for a prisoner to try to escape and fail. It made the Indians mad, and they would show little mercy afterwards. Indeed, it was a perilous thing to fall into the hands of the Indians at any time; and many people would be killed before taken captive by them. If they got a grudge against a prisoner, he had a poor show of ever getting away. Simon Kenton, who was on Cheat River in 1771, five years before the founding St. George, was once captured by the Indians. He had stolen seventeen of their horses, and when they caught him they put him in a field and three hundred of them tried to pound him to death; but, he whipped them out eight times and got away. They tied him up three times to roast him; but he still got away and escaped to Kentucky. But, he was more fortunate than the most of prisoners; and, besides, he was such a terrible fighter that they were afraid of him.

The Indians in Tucker had a town in the Horse Shoe, opposite the lower end of Sycamore Island. The traces of the village may still be seen in summer on account of the

come alone so far into the wilderness. But, in spite of danger, Captain Parsons and his brother came often while they were surveying and locating their land. They crossed the Backbone and Alleghany mountains near the Fairfax Stone. In order that they might the more successfully elude the Indians, they were accustomed to put the shoes on their horses, toes behind, so that the Indians would be deceived in the direction in which the horses had gone.

On one occasion Captain Parsons had come alone from Moorefield. He had visited his land, and had just crossed the river at the mouth of Horse Shoe Run, when an Indian, hidden in the weeds near by, gobbled like a turkey. The savage probably thought that he could decoy his man within gunshot; but in this he was mistaken. Captain Parsons was too well posted in Indian tricks to be trapped in such a manner. Instead of going to kill the turkey, he put spurs to his horse and reached Moorefield that night, a distance of near seventy miles. The path was through the woods, and crossed the Alleghany Mountains. These were the first locations of lands in Tucker County. The next chapter will relate to the settlement of these lands, and of others taken up near the same time by John Minear, Robert Cunningham, Henry Fink and John Goffe.

The first explorers and settlers of the county were the Parsons and Minear families. The main part of the county's history has been enacted by the representatives of one or the other of these.

onies. Within six years, settlements were on all the principal rivers. But none were yet in Tucker. Capt. James Parsons knew of the Horse Shoe Bottom, and was only waiting for a suitable time to lay patents on the lands. Sometime before 1774, probably about 1772, he and his brother Thomas came over to Cheat from Moorefield, to look at the lands and select them favorable places. James chose the Horse Shoe, and Thomas all the land from the mouth of Horse Shoe Run to the Holly Meadows, exclusive of the Horse Shoe. They afterward obtained patents for these lands; and James bought some other tracts, among which was the farm since owned by the Bonnifields, on Horse Shoe Run. This was originally a "corn right."

These lands were marked out at the time of their selection, but, in 1774, as shall be seen in the next chapter, a colony from the South Branch built a fort in the Horse Shoe, and cleared some of the land. But, in two years, John Minear, leader of the colony, removed to St. George, on land of his own.

When the Parsons brothers were passing back and forth between Moorefield and the Horse Shoe, there was not any particular war between the white people and the Indians. But, the Indians were always ready to kill a man when they could find him by himself in the woods. They would be still more likely to do this if he had a good gun and a horse. These were articles which the Indians always wanted, and they would plunder a man of these whenever they got a good chance. James and Thomas Parsons always rode splendid horses, and the straggling bands of Indians who roamed along Cheat were very anxious to steal them. They would have killed the riders to get the horses.

In this state of affairs it was dangerous for two men to

ment of lands and the deeds and rights appertaining thereto. How many came with him is not known. The names of a few survive, and we know that there were others. They did not come merely to explore the country and speculate in lands; but, they brought with them their families, their household goods, and what movable property they could, and had no other intention than that of making the valley of Cheat their permanent home.

They reached their destination early in 1774, probably in March. They spent the first night in the woods, not far from the crossing at Willow Point. The men at once commenced work on a fort, which they built as a defense against the Indians. The fort was nothing more than a large log house, with holes left between the logs through which the inmates could shoot at Indians. The building stood on or near the spot where now stands the residence of S. E. Parsons. It was used as a fort and also as a dwelling house for all the families. It was made large enough to give room for all. In the daytime, the men went to the woods to clear corn fields, and left the woman and children in the fort. If any alarm was given of Indians, the men would run to the fort, and bar the doors, and watch through the cracks in the walls for the coming of the enemy. They never lay down to sleep without locking the doors to keep the Indians out.

For awhile everything went well in their new home. As the spring came on, the weather got warm and delightful, and the huge oaks and gigantic chestnut trees came out in leaf. The men worked hard, and soon had cleared the logs and trees from several small corn fields, which they planted as soon as the frost was all out of the ground. The settlers sometimes were out of bread and had to live on meat; but,

CHAPTER II.

JOHN MINEAR.

AS NEARLY as can now be ascertained, John Minear first visited Tucker County in the year 1773. He was a native of Germany, where he was born about 1730. It has been said that he was a soldier under Frederick the Great; but the truth of this is not well authenticated. In 1767, he came to America. He was already married, and brought with him a small family, among whom was David Minear, then twelve years of age.

John Minear bought land on the Potomac River, and lived there until 1774. He had heard the reports brought back by Capt. James Parsons, and he determined to visit the new country and see it for himself. Whether any one accompanied him or not, is not stated; but, probably, he was not alone in his series of explorations, which he made in 1773. He visited the country along Cheat River, from the Holly Meadows to Licking Falls; and, having selected a suitable farm in the Horse Shoe, he returned to the Potomac for his family.

So great was his influence, and so general was the desire for emigration, that he found little difficulty in gathering about him quite a company of farmers, willing to risk their fortunes in the new land. He was the leader of the colony, and all placed confidence in his judgment and trust in his bravery. His education was in advance of the farmers of his time; and, those who came with him looked upon him, not only as a military leader in expected wars with the Indians, but also as a counselor in civil affairs, in the settle-

danger, but all west of the Alleghany Mountains were unsafe. Minear's colony in the Horse Shoe soon found occasion for alarm. Indian tracks were discovered not far from the fort, and the people were in constant fear of being massacred. Nobody went beyond the reach of the guns of the fort, except with the greatest caution. But, they had to hunt through the woods for venison and other meat; for, the corn was not yet ripe enough for bread. Sometimes the hunters were chased by the savages, as was the case with one of the men who went to the Sugar Lands, on the Backbone Mountain, some four miles east from the fort. He was hunting, and looking at the country, when he heard strange noises on the hill above him, and immediately heard answers from the valley below. He knew at once that it was Indians trying to trap him, having nearly surrounded him already. He affected not to notice the noises; but, he started off at a rapid rate down a cove that led into Coburn Run. When he passed over the bluff in his descent to the run, the noise of the Indians, who were whistling to each other and gobbling like turkeys, died away in the distance, and for some time he heard nothing more of it. However, he did not slacken his speed, but hurried down the rocky bed of the run, and had gone nearly two miles when he was suddenly startled by a hooting like that of an owl, on the hill near above him. The imitation was not so perfect but that he could detect that it was not an owl. He knew that it was an Indian. He was yet three miles from the fort, and only by flight could he hope to escape. The channel of the stream was rocky, full of cataracts and falls, and trees that had lopped into the ravine from both sides. Over and through these blockades and obstacles he ran as fast as he could, and with as little noise as possible. From this point,

venison and bear meat were plentiful, and there was no danger of starving. What corn and wheat they had was carried on pack horses from the Potomac River.

Early in the summer, new danger from the Indians began to be feared. Up to this time, there had been no actual hostility, except an occasional murder of an Indian by a white man or of a white man by an Indian. Even this had not disturbed the settlement in the Horse Shoe. But, with the return of the spring, in 1774, a war seemed certain. Along the Ohio, above and below Wheeling, several murders were committed, both by white men and by Indians. Greathouse, a white man, fell upon a camp of Indians a few miles above Wheeling, and killed men and women. This so enraged the Indians that they at once commenced war upon all the settlements west of the Alleghany Mountains. The principal settlements in West Virginia then were on the Monongahela, the Valley River, the West Fork and on the Greenbrier, Kanawha and the Ohio. The small fort in the Horse Shoe cannot be reckoned as a settlement. But the Indians soon found it out. In fact, it was on a famous war path that crossed the river at the mouth of Horse Shoe Run, and the Indians who would walk to and fro along this path must necessarily find the fields.

Early in the summer of 1774, Colonel McDonald, with a few hundred men, marched into Ohio and burnt some Indian towns on the Muskingum River. Nobody but Indians lived in Ohio then, and they were furious when the white men burnt the towns and cut down all their corn. As soon as McDonald left the country, the Indians hurried across the river, and commenced killing people and burning houses and barns in revenge for the treatment received at his hand. The settlers who lived nearest the Ohio were in the greatest

winter of 1774-5, there was not a white man in Tucker County, so far as is now known.

John Minear and his colony remained on the Potomac about eighteen months. Whether they all remained together, as they had lived in the Horse Shoe, can not now be stated. Nor is it known who composed the colony, further than a few names. But, they could not content themselves to give up the valley of Cheat forever. They were only waiting for a more auspicious season for founding a permanent settlement.

The next we hear of John Minear, he was again on Cheat, and was building up a colony on the site of the present town of St. George. For some reason, he did not return to the Horse Shoe, but chose St. George in its stead. What influenced him to this choice is unknown. But, it is probable that Capt. James Parsons had by that time secured the pre-emption of the Horse Shoe lands; and Minear, desirous of having the colony on his own lands, moved three miles further down the river, and located at the mouth of Mill Run, where the county seat of Tucker has since been built. It cannot be ascertained in what year Parsons secured his grant of the lands above St. George; but, it is well known that they were for a long time in dispute between him and Minear, and the final settlement at the land office gave the Horse Shoe lands to Parsons. The greater part of this land is still in the Parsons family, having descended in an unbroken line of succession from Captain Parsons to its present owners, Joseph and S. E. Parsons.

The emigrants which Minear led to St. George were not identical with those whom he conducted to the county in 1774. Some who had come in that year did not return in

there are two accounts of the affair. One says that, as he was climbing down over a fall, an Indian came sliding down the hill within a few steps of him. The Indian was snatching and grabbing at brush, and seemed to be doing his best to stop himself. It is thought that he had tried to run along the side of the hill, which was very steep, and, missing his footing, could not regain it until he slid nearly to the run, and was almost under the hunter's feet. But the hunter saw his enemy just in time to escape. He wheeled and ran under the falls of the creek into a dry cavern beyond. Then, turning, he discharged his gun at the Indian; but, there is no evidence that the shot took effect. The Indian seemed to think that the white man was shooting at him from under the water; and, scrambling and clawing back up the hill, he disappeared in the weeds. The hunter made use of the opportunity and escaped to the fort.

The summer of 1774 was passing away; and danger from the Indians did not lessen. It is not recorded that any of the settlers were killed; but, all must have felt that the peril of the colony was great; for, late in the summer it began to be considered whether it would not be better to abandon the fort and retreat to the Potomac. This was about the time that Lord Dunmore and General Lewis were organizing their army for a general campaign against the Indians in Ohio. Probably the settlers in the Horse Shoe heard of the gathering strife, and knowing that hard fighting was at hand, thought it best to retire beyond the Alleghanies till the storm should pass away. Be this as it may, early in the fall of that year, 1774, the people of the Horse Shoe collected together what they could of their property, and fled to the Potomac. The fort, the small fields and all the improvements were thus abandoned; and, during the

in the fort. Light was admitted through the port-holes, as the openings between the logs were called. In cold weather, or when no light was wanted, blocks of wood were fitted in the port-holes. The door was made of split boards, so thick that bullets would not go through. The fort was surrounded by palisades, or a line of stout posts planted firmly in the ground side by side and fitted closely together. These posts were about twelve feet high. They resembled a huge paling fence, and enclosed over one fourth of an acre of ground. The fort stood in the center of the enclosure, which was higher ground, and gave the inmates command of the neighboring fields. No Indian could approach in the daytime without running great risk of being shot.

Among the first improvements in the colony was a mill at St. George, near where the school-house now stands. The mill-race, and some of the old timbers of the dam, are yet to be seen. The mill was intended only for grinding corn. At that time, no wheat, rye or buckwheat was grown in the county.

During the first four years the settlement prospered greatly. New emigrants came into the country, and brought horses, cows and domestic animals with them. But, there was constant anxiety lest the Indians should break into the settlement. In the winter there was not so much fear, because the half clad savages did not travel through the snow when it could be avoided. They would be in danger of freezing to death; and they preferred to remain in their huts on the other side of the Ohio River. But, when spring came, all the wigwams and Shawanese dens poured out their warriors; and West Virginia, Kentucky and western Pennsylvania were overrun by warlike savages. It was thus at the commencement of the year 1780. That year

1776; while some came in 1776 for the first time. Nor do we know the number of those who came in 1776. In addition to John Minear and his two sons, David and Jonathan, and several daughters, and other women, there were men named Miller, Cooper, Goffe* and Cameron. John Minear's land claim was along the north side of the river, from St. George down the river two miles. On the other side, but not extending as far east as St. George, was the claim of Jonathan Minear, John's son. Cooper's land was two miles further down the river, at the foot of Miller Hill. Cameron located on the opposite side of the river from Miller Hill.

John Minear's land, like that of James Parsons, has continued in the Minear family to this day. It is now the property of D. S. Minear, Esq.

During the early years of the colony at St. George, there is on record nothing that hindered its prosperity. The first step of the settlers was to build a fort as a defense against the Indians. This fort stood on the ground where now stands the Court-house. It was a better fort than the one in the Horse Shoe, and was also four times as large. It was composed of a large log house, surrounded by palisades.

The logs, of which the house was built, were notched and fitted close, one upon another; and, so well were they placed that there was left not a crevice through which Indians could shoot. But, in the upper story, openings were made between the logs, so that those in the house could shoot at approaching Indians. The chimney ran up on the inside. This was to prevent the Indians from getting to the roof by climbing up the chimney. There were no windows

* This name must not be confounded with that of James Goff, who settled on the river near the Preston County line.

into Lewis County, where they suddenly appeared before a fort on Hacker's Creek, known in early times as West's Fort. There were only a few men in the fort, and they were afraid to go out to fight the enemy. The Indians did not make an attack on the house, but lay hid near about in the woods, ready to shoot any one who should come out. The people thus penned in, were on the point of starving, and knew not whence deliverance was to come. Buckhannon was the nearest place where assistance could be obtained, and that was sixteen miles. One in going there would be exposed to almost certain death, for the Indians were entirely round the fort.

One of the inmates, Jesse Hughes, was a man who shrunk from no duty and quailed at no danger. He was the most successful Indian fighter in West Virginia, except the Zanes of Wheeling, Captain Brady and Lewis Wetzel. He had passed through scores of hair-breadth escapes, and had fought the Indians for eleven years and knew their nature well. He it was who explored the country westward from Buckhannon. He discovered and gave name to the West Fork River, and was the first white man who stood on the site of Weston. This was in 1769. From that time till the close of the Indian wars, in 1795, he was ever where brave men were most needed, in the front. To him Clarksburg almost owed its existence. There was scarcely a settlement in the central part of the State that did not profit by the bravery and courage of Jesse Hughes. Even St. George, sixty miles distant, had occasion to thank him, although his assistance did not avert the disasters which are now to be recorded.

He was in West's Fort when the Indians besieged it. His farm was almost within sight of the fort, and he had

will ever be memorable in border history on account of the raids and murders by the Indians upon the white people. But, it is not so famous in that respect as 1777 and 1782. But, so far as Tucker County is concerned, the years 1780 and 1781 were the most disastrous in the Indian Wars. St. George was then the most flourishing settlement on Cheat River, and they soon learned the paths that led to the new country. It may be borne in mind that Tucker was naturally one of the most secluded localities in the State, being even less exposed to Indian attacks than Preston was. Randolph, and the more southern counties along the western base of the Alleghanies, were well known to the Indians, who, in the French and Indian War, had passed to and fro through them while making raids into Virginia. But, there was no occasion for passing through Tucker; and, if occasional bands of Indians did so, as in the case of the capture of James Parsons, they did it for the purpose of hunting or making explorations. Not so with the counties along the Ohio, and on the Monongahela and Kanawha. The Indians from Ohio could cross over at any time, and within a short distance find a thriving settlement to plunder. Before they could reach Tucker or Preston, they would have to pass through several inhabited counties, which the Indians did not like to do, because the settlers might track them. But, Tucker's isolated position and its high mountain defenses did not exempt it from its full share of Indian outrages. The first of these was in the spring of 1780.

The band of Indians who made this incursion into Tucker, were remarkably persevering in their pursuit of wickedness. Very early in the spring of 1780 they crossed the Ohio in the vicinity of Parkersburg, and made their way unobserved

markable runner, he quickly overtook them and shot another Indian. The other Indians got behind trees; and, in a few minutes, the rest of the whites came up and renewed the fight. One of the whites was shot through the arm; and, a third Indian, who was hiding behind a log, received a bullet which caused him to go howling away. In a few minutes the whole band of savages took to flight, and night coming on put a stop to the pursuit.

Early next morning fifteen men took the trail of the Indians and followed them several miles, and finally found where they were hidden in a laurel thicket. As they approached, one of the whites was shot; but, the Indians got away. However, the settlers found several Indian horses with their legs tied together. The Indians had left their animals in this fix to keep them from running off. The settlers took them back to Buckhannon. For several days nothing more was seen of the Indians; and, in the hope that the savages had left the country, some of the people returned to their farms. But, the enemy were not gone. They killed a man and took a young lady prisoner. The people fled back to the fort, and the Indians found no further opportunity for doing mischief at that time.

Thus far, the savages had raided through Lewis and Upshur counties. They now passed into Randolph, where they continued to murder the people and burn property. They first made their appearance in the upper end of Tygart's Valley. This was in March. A man in passing along the path saw moccasin tracks in the mud. He stopped to look at them, and while doing so heard some one in the brush whisper: "Let him alone; he will go and bring more." He at once suspected Indians; and, without further examination, he hurried to Hadden's fort and reported

sought shelter there in common with his neighbors. After the place had been invested for some time, and the inmates were getting short of provisions, while the enemy showed no disposition to raise the siege, it began to grow manifest that something must be done to procure help in driving the Indians off, or the place must fall. The plan most practicable seemed that of sending some one to Buckhannon with intelligence of the distress, and bring help from thence. Hughes volunteered to go; and, on a dark night, he slipped from the fort, broke by the Indians, and ran to Buckhannon. He collected a company of men and at once started back. He arrived about daylight, and it was thought best to abandon the fort. This was done. The inmates, men, women and children, proceeded to Buckhannon. On the way the Indians tried to separate the company so as to attack it, but, in this they failed, and the settlers all reached Buckhannon in safety.

The Indians followed on to Buckhannon and prowled about the settlement a few days. They waylaid some men who were going to the fort, and one of them named Curl was shot in the chin. All the other men, five in number, started to run; but Curl called to them to stand their ground, for they could whip the Indians. But, the men were some distance away, and a powerful Indian warrior drew a tomahawk and started at Curl, who was now alone and wounded. Nothing daunted, he raised his gun to shoot the Indian. But, the blood from his wound had dampened the powder, and the gun missed fire. Instantly picking up another gun, which had been dropped in the excitement, he shot the savage and brought him to the ground. The Indians then retreated.

One of the whites ran after them alone, and being a re-

it was a prolonged fight. But the savage got off victorious, and Nelson was killed. When the whites visited the scene of the battle, they found the dead man where he fell. The ground around him was torn up, as though a long struggle had taken place. It undoubtedly was a dear victory for the savage.

In a few days the Indians fell upon the family of John Gibson, on a branch of Tygart's Valley River. The family were at the sugar camp, when the Indians surprised them and took them prisoners. Mrs. Gibson was killed.

With this, the Indians left Randolph County and proceeded into Tucker. Of course, it is understood that these counties—Lewis, Upshur, Randolph and Tucker—are called by their present names, and not by the names by which they were known at that time. Nor is it absolutely certain that all the mischief, narrated and to be yet narrated, was done by this band of Indians. It requires some little arbitrary chronology to arrange into this order the fragments and scraps of history and legends gathered from various sources, but principally from Withers' Border Warfare. But, at this point, Withers' narrative ceases to furnish material for the account, except the mere mention of the killing of Sims above St. George; and, for the rest of the raid, and the murder of Jonathan Minear below St. George, and the captivity and rescue of Washburn, this account rests upon the authority of private papers and the traditions that have come down from generation to generation. Unwritten tradition is one of the most unreliable sources from which to gather history. Yet in the absence of all other means, it must be resorted to. However, the following account of the Indian raid through Tucker has records for authority, and tradition furnishes little more than the minutia.

what he had seen and heard. But, he was not believed. There was a party of men from Greenbrier spending the night at the fort, and they intended to start home in the morning. Their road home led by this place where the tracks had been seen. When they got ready to go, a party of citizens volunteered to accompany them to this place, and ascertain whether there really were tracks in the mud.

The men proceeded carelessly, and when near the suspected hiding place of the enemy, they were fired upon by Indians in ambuscade. The horsemen sprang into a gallop and escaped; but the men on foot were surrounded by Indians. The only means of escape was by crossing the river and climbing a steep hill on the opposite side. In doing this they were exposed to the fire of the enemy, and several were killed. John McLain was almost to the summit of the hill when he was shot. James Rolston, who was still further, was also killed at the same instant. James Crouch was likewise ascending the hill, and was nearly to the top when he was shot. But he was only wounded, and the next day made his way to the fort. John Nelson, another of the party, was killed at the water's edge. He had crossed the river with the rest, and would have ascended the hill with them; but, they were a little in advance of him, and when they fell, he turned back, and tried to escape by running down the bank of the river. But this was a fatal policy. A fierce Indian leaped upon him, and a desperate fight ensued. No white man saw it to tell how it went. It is only known from circumstances that it was a hand-to-hand fight, and a terrible one. The breech of Nelson's gun was split and shattered, and from appearances he had pounded the Indian with it. His hands, still clinched although he was dead, contained tufts of Indian hair, and gave evidence that

of export was the skins of bear and other fur-bearing animals. With a load of these strapped on pack horses, the settlers filed away through the woods toward Winchester. It was then early in March, and they expected to make the trip within two weeks.

Intelligence of the Indian murders in Lewis and Upshur counties had reached St. George, and the people, not knowing whither the enemy had gone, thought it best to leave their farms and move into the fort. This they did. But some who had the small-pox were excluded from the fort. This was a harsh course to pursue; but, it was rendered necessary. It was deemed better for a few to run the risk of falling a prey to Indians than for the whole colony to be stricken down with the small-pox. Accordingly, those who had that disease were not allowed to come near the fort. Among those thus excluded was the family of John Sims, who lived about five miles above St. George at a place ever since known as Sims' Bottom. Sims' Knob, a high mountain overlooking the Horse Shoe, is also named from this man.*

When the Indians left Tygart's Valley, they aimed for St. George; and, by passing along the west bank of Cheat River from the mouth of Pheasant Run, they had arrived within five miles of the fort, when they came into the clearing of Sims. The house stood on the bank of a swamp full of brush and weeds. The Indians made their way unobserved into this thicket, and were cautiously crawling toward the house when they were seen by a negro wench,

* Sims was brought to Cheat by Captain Parsons, and was only a tenant on Parsons' land. He had been placed on the farm where he was killed, to oversee the upper part of James Parsons' land, and to keep Thomas Parsons' cattle from crossing over into the Horse Shoe. The sycamore tree behind which the Indian lay was still to be seen a few years ago.

There is question concerning the date of the incursion ; but contemporary facts ought to settle the question, and place it in the spring of 1780. Some maintain that John Minear was killed before Jonathan was, and that the murder of the latter took place as late as 1795. But this is so plainly a gross mistake that it is not deemed necessary to refute it.

It was in March, 1780 ; and the Indians, after their ambuscade on the Tygart River, moved over Laurel Hill and down Cheat River toward St. George. That had been a severe winter for Minear's colony. In addition to the suffering from want, the small-pox broke out among the people, and the affliction fell heavily upon the destitute settlers, who had spent the greater part of the winter without bread or salt. One thing was to their advantage, and that was that there was little to be feared from Indians during the winter months. The Indians seldom broke into settlements in cold weather when the snow was on the ground.

So, the colony at St. George pulled through the winter the best they could. They did not occupy the fort ; but each man lived on his own farm, and worked to clear fields in which to plant grain the coming summer.

It was customary at that time to go east once a year to lay in a supply of such things as must be had. For the central part of West Virginia, the eastern market was Winchester. The people of the frontier counties carried such produce as they had to that place and bartered it for salt, iron, ammunition and a few blacksmith and cooper tools. With the first appearance of spring, the colonists at St. George prepared to send their plunder to market. It was the plan to go and return before the warm weather would bring Indians into the settlements. The principal article

than fifty. The whites expected an attack any hour. If the attack had been made, it is doubtful if the place could have held out; because the hill near by would have given the assailing party a great advantage.

The garrison were desirous of impressing the Indians with the idea that the fort contained a strong force of men. To this end, they dressed first in one kind of clothes and then in another, at each change walking about the yard in full view of the foe. The Indians, who were all the time looking on, and not more than a quarter of a mile away, must have been led to believe that the fort was stronger than they could attack with safety. At any rate, they made no assault; and, in a day or two they disappeared from the hill, and the people hoped that the foe so much dreaded had indeed left the country.

However, it was deemed best to remain in the fort till the return of those who had gone east. This was not long. The men returned the next evening, and for the present little fear of danger was entertained. The people did not remain so constantly on the lookout. When they began to visit their cabins near about the fort, it was found that the Indians had rummaged them, and had carried off what they could, and had destroyed much that they could not take. Still, nothing was seen to indicate that the enemy was yet in the country.

Some of the men took their families to their cabins, determined to do a little more work before the season for Indian incursions—for it was still earlier in the spring than the Indians were in the habit of making raids into the settlements. Among those who left the fort under the impression that the red men were gone and danger for the present at an end, was Daniel Cameron, who lived opposite

who ran to the door and gave the alarm. Bernard Sims caught up his gun and ran to the door. He was just recovering from the small-pox. As he stepped out at the door, he was shot by the Indians and fell forward in the yard. The savages leaped out from the brush and rushed into the yard ready to tomahawk and scalp the dead man. But as they came up they observed that he had a disease, to them most terrible; and, instead of scalping him, and killing those in the house, they took to flight, yelling as they ran: "Small-pox! Small-pox!"

They kept clear of that cabin after that, although they remained in the neighborhood several days. They moved on toward St. George. The people there discovered that the enemy was in the vicinity, and the strictest guard was kept night and day. Nobody left the fort under any circumstances.

The fort stood where the Court-house now stands, about two hundred yards from the river, on a rising ground. The Indians remained on the opposite side of the river, and concealed themselves on a bluff overlooking the fort and surroundings. Here they remained several days. There were not many men in the fort. Some had been kept away on account of small-pox; and those who had gone to Winchester had not yet returned. The garrison well knew of the presence of the enemy, and knew just where the Indians were hidden; yet, they affected not to suspicion that an enemy was near. But, the greatest anxiety was felt, lest the Indians should make an attack while the place was so defenseless. The concealed foe could be descried crouching under the thicket of laurel on the bluff beyond the river; and their number was probably overestimated, although the actual number could not have been much less

selected this site at the same time that his father selected the one where St. George stands, and he made it his home, except when danger compelled him to remove to the fort for safety. When the Indians first came into the neighborhood, he abandoned his farm and retired to St. George, where he remained until he considered all danger at an end. But, when nothing more could be seen of the enemy, and nothing heard, except vague rumors, of which there always was sufficient, he determined to visit his farm and look after his cattle. His brother-in-law, Washburn, volunteered to go with him, and, at daylight, the two left the fort together and proceeded to the ford, about half mile below. Here they were joined by Cameron, who was afoot, and was on his way to his own farm. His way was along the northern bank of the river, while Minear and Washburn's was along the southern bank. They talked a few minutes, and separated, Minear and Washburn, on horseback, crossing the river and Cameron proceeding down the northern bank on foot.

The morning was clear and cold, for it was in March or early in April. The men on horseback passed very near where the Indians lay concealed, but not so near as to be shot. However, the savages probably learned from their conversation where they were going, and running on ahead, hid in the tall dry weeds that stood thick along the bank of the river in the field where the cattle were. The men rode leisurely on, thinking little of danger. When they got to the cabin they tied their horses. Washburn proceeded to the field to feed the cattle fodder, while Minear went to get corn for the hogs. With a shock of fodder on his back, Washburn was passing through the bars when some Indians sprang out of the fence corner and seized him. Immediately

Miller Hill, on the farm since known as the Bowman Plantation, by the nearest road some three miles from St. George. He removed his family to his farm, and that night they locked the door, as was usual at that time. Awhile after dark, a noise was heard like the rattle of a charger against a powder-horn. If no danger had been feared, this slight incident would scarcely have been noticed. But, at a time of such intense anxiety, it at once aroused suspicions. Presently other disturbances were heard, and it became nearly certain that Indians were prowling about. The light in the house was extinguished, and the family crawled out at the back door, and hid in a brush heap until everything became quiet, when they made their way to the fort, and reported what had taken place. But the people were not disposed to credit the story, and little attention was paid to it.

A day or two more passed, and nothing further was seen or heard of the Indians. But, all this time the treacherous savages were lying hid on the hill above the mouth of Clover Run, in a field near the present residence of Hon. William Ewin. They were about a mile from the fort; but still in sight of it. They had abandoned the laurel thicket opposite the fort, because they suspected that the garrison had discovered them. They selected their new hiding place, and remained in it during the day, and at night they prowled about the settlement. From where they were they could see all that went on in and about St. George, and they were ready to fall upon any stray party who should go out. An opportunity for this soon came.

Jonathan Minear's farm was two miles below St. George, on the south side of the river, just below where John Auvil, Esq., now lives. Jonathan Run is named from him. He

it all at a glance, although he did not know the whole truth. He saw Minear overtaken and tomahawked, and supposed that Washburn was likewise killed. He had heard the discharge of guns, and concluded that by them Washburn was killed. Without waiting for further investigation—in fact, further investigation was not possible—he wheeled and ran with all his speed up the river toward the fort.

But the discharge of guns had been heard at St. George, and the wildest excitement prevailed. The men mounted their horses in hot haste and galloped off down the river. They did not cross at the ford, but continued down the northern bank. This probably saved them from a bloody ambuscade; for the Indians were ready for them, and would have cut them off almost to a man, had they gone down the same path that Washburn and Minear had taken. But fortune favored them, and they continued down the northern shore.

They had not proceeded more than half-way when they met Cameron, who was out of breath from running and could scarcely speak for excitement. He told them that Minear and Washburn were killed. The party halted, and a hasty consultation took place. If the men were already dead, it could avail them little to be avenged. The strength of the Indians was not known; and it was feared that they would immediately bear down upon the fort. Under the circumstances it was thought best to hurry back and put the place in the best possible condition for defense. This wise resolution was immediately carried into effect. The men rode back, carrying Cameron with them, and brought the sad intelligence to the fort. All was hurry and activity. There was no time for lamentations. A supply of water was provided, so that the inmates might not suffer from thirst

there was a discharge of guns, and Washburn saw Minear running toward the river, and a dozen Indians after him. Minear ran as though wounded, and the savages gained fast upon him, and overtook him on the bank of the river.

He had been shot in the thigh, and was so disabled that he could not escape. When he reached the bank, he saw that the Indians would strike him with their tomahawks; and, to avoid the blows, for him the last resort, he ran round a beech tree, bracing himself against the tree with one hand and fighting the Indians off with the other.

It is a characteristic of the Indians that, when they chase a man, as they did Minear, they always run one behind another, and do not try to head off the object of their pursuit. Thus, when they came up with Minear at the beech tree and he ran round it, instead of some of them turning back in the opposite direction to head him off, they all ran round the same way, round and round and round. They were striking at him with their tomahawks, and he was trying to ward off the blows. Several times they missed him and struck the tree, and the marks of their tomahawks are to be seen on the tree to this day. Three of his fingers were cut off while thus defending himself. But the odds were too great against him, and he fell, his head cleft by a tomahawk.

All this, from the first attack on Washburn till Minear fell dead, was done in a few seconds; and, while Washburn was standing with the fodder still on his back, and looking at the Indians who were murdering Minear, Cameron was also an eye witness from the other side of the river. Washburn, in his anxiety for his companion, forgot that himself was a prisoner; and, not until ordered to do so by the Indians, did he throw down his fodder. But Cameron realized

gathered in from all the settlements for miles around, both above and below St. George.

It had been a cold, frosty night. Early in the morning the men formed in a body and marched down the river, on the the north side. When they reached a point opposite where Minear was killed, the men ranged themselves in line of battle along the side of the hill, and sent Moats, the negro, across the river to see if the Indians were anywhere about. The men stood ready to fire, in case the enemy should put in an appearance. Moats rode over, searched the thickets up and down the shore, and saw nothing to indicate that the foe was hidden anywhere around. Then the men crossed over, using the greatest caution lest they should fall into an ambushade. They feared that the Indians were hidden in the weeds, and would wait till an advantage was presented, and then run out and attack the party.

When they got over the river they found Minear lying dead where he fell. The Indians had killed him by the beech tree, and had chopped the upper part of his head off with their tomahawks. They then broke his skull into fragments and drove the pieces into a stump hard by. A dog that had always followed him was found guarding the dead man.

Search was then made for Washburn. It was not known what had become of him. Cameron had not seen him; but he supposed that it was at him that the guns had been fired. The whites explored the woods and the corn field, but could find no trace of him. Nor was anything seen of Indians. But, finally a trail was found leading up a ridge, since known as Indian Point, and by following it a short distance it was found that the Indians had retreated by

in case of a siege. Ammunition was gotten ready. Large quantities of bullets were molded, and all the guns were loaded ready for an attack any moment.

The day passed, and no attack was made. The enemy had not appeared in sight. But the anxiety and dread were not lessened; for it then began to be believed that the Indians were probably keeping out of sight in order to throw the garrison off their guard, and that an attack would be made that night. No one thought of sleep. Every man was up and in arms. The fort was not defended by regular soldiers, but depended for defense upon those who took shelter within its walls. When night came, and the additional suspense and fear, that always accompany darkness and silence, fell upon the people, they determined to put on a bold front, hoping that, by doing so, they could strike terror into the hearts of the Indians and keep them at bay.

There was in the fort a gigantic negro named Moats. Him they dressed as a soldier, and had him march round and round the fort, within the palisades, beating a drum. This was to cause a belief among the Indians, should they be skulking near, that a large force was under arms in the fort-yard, and that this martial display was a legitimate manifestation of power. This was kept up all night, and scarcely an eye was closed in slumber. No enemy appeared. Whether the display of force had alarmed the Indians, they did not then know. But, when the morning broke, and no enemy, or sign of any, was in sight, the men prepared to visit the scene of the tragedy of the previous day. It is not now known how many men were in St. George at that time; but, judging from what is known on the subject, there must have been between twenty and thirty. They were

with them. It was resolved to fall on the Indians at once. The whole party of whites cautiously approached and let the Indians have it. A tumultuous uproar followed. The savages caught up what plunder they could snatch, and bounded away into the woods, while the whites rushed into the camp to take the wounded savages prisoner. Washburn was found unhurt. Two or three of the enemy were shot. While the whites stood round the fire in the excitement of the victory, an Indian came ramping into their midst, snatched up a pouch of something from the ground, and was off before the whites recovered enough from their surprise to capture or shoot the scoundrel. It was thought that the pouch contained some superstitious concoction of medicine.

After this skirmish, when it was certain that the Indians were gone and no more punishment could be inflicted upon them, the company returned to St. George. The Indians made their way back across the Ohio River into their own country.

About the colony of St. George, affairs went on well enough for some time. The people were very careful not to expose themselves to the Indians. Some returned to their farms and underwent all risks; while others would go to their plantations during the day and repair to the fort at night. Another visit was made by the Indians about this time. The date is not certain, but it is believed to have been in 1780. A small band of Indians carried away a boy who was at work in a field at the mouth of Clover Run, nearly a mile from the fort. Not much is known of this event; but it is said that when the Indians took the boy prisoner he had with him a pet crow, and it followed him nearly to the Ohio River, where the Indians killed it, be-

that way on the day before. It was also discovered that Washburn was carried off a prisoner. His track was distinguished from those of the Indians. The Indians did not always kill every one whom they caught. Often they carried their prisoners into captivity, and sometimes they would take a captive with them hundreds of miles into their country, and then burn him or pound him to death. At times, prisoners were well treated; but, it was generally considered that to fall a captive to the Indians was a fate little less to be dreaded than death. So, when it was found that Washburn was taken prisoner it was considered that he was little more fortunate than Minear, who was killed.

It was resolved to follow the Indians as soon as Minear should be buried. His dead body was taken up, bound on a horse and carried to the fort. He had stiffened and frozen as he fell. His arms were extended wide, and he was covered with coagulated blood. Thus he was carried to St. George and was buried. No one now knows where his grave is; but it is believed to be under a chestnut tree about one half-mile east of the town.

The next morning as many men as could be spared from the fort went in pursuit of the Indians. They trailed them a night and two days. Had the Indians immediately shaped their course for the Ohio River they must have escaped before the whites could have overtaken them. But they did not do this. They seemed to be hunting for settlements about the Valley River, and by spending their time in this manner they allowed the pursuing party to come up. The Indian camp was discovered awhile after dark on the second night. David Minear, brother to Jonathan, crawled up near enough to spy out the position of the enemy, and to see that Washburn was indeed a prisoner

few miles below Philippi they set themselves in ambush at a narrow place in the road.

About this time commissioners had been appointed to adjust land claims in this part of the State, and to execute the necessary legal papers to those who had complied with the law in pre-empting the public lands. The commissioners met at Clarksburg. Land claimants went there from all neighboring parts to present claims for consideration. The people of St. George, in common with those of other settlements, sent their agents to Clarksburg to attend to the business and to obtain deeds for the various tracts of land claimed by the different settlers. Those whom St. George sent were John Minear, Daniel Cameron, two men named Miller, Mr. Cooper and Mr. Goffe. They had proceeded to Clarksburg, attended to their business, and were on their way home at the time the Indians were lying in their ambuscade below Philippi. It seems from the circumstances that the Indians were looking for them.

The Indians placed themselves in a position commanding the road, and hung a leather gun-case by a string over the path. This was to attract attention, cause a halt and give the savages an opportunity to take deliberate aim. The trap was well set, and the men came riding along the path, thinking nothing of danger. The path was so narrow that they could ride only in single file. They were almost under the leather decoy before they saw it. They instantly brought their horses to a halt. The truth flashed into Minear's mind, and quickly wheeling his horse, he exclaimed "Indians!" The whole party would have wheeled; but, instantly a discharge of guns from the hidden foe threw them into the wildest confusion. Horses and men fell together. Minear, Cameron and Cooper were killed on the

cause they thought it possessed of an evil spirit. It is not known what became of the boy.

The year 1781 records the greatest calamity that ever befell the St. George colony. It was the murder by Indians of Daniel Cameron, Mr. Cooper and John Minear. They were the three foremost men of the settlement. John Minear had planned and founded the colony; and to him more than to any one else was its prosperity due. He was killed in April, 1781.

The band of Indians, by whom the murder was committed, made a raid very similar to that of the gang that killed Jonathan Minear. Nearly the same territory was overrun and nearly the extent of wickedness done. The savages first appeared in Lewis County, on the head of Stone Coal Creek, where they waylaid three men named Schoolcraft, who had gone there from Buckhannon for the purpose of hunting pigeons. The Indian shot at them and killed one. The two others were taken prisoner, and it is not certain that they were ever again heard of. But it was believed that they joined the Indians, and afterwards guided parties of the savages through the settlements and helped them kill white people. These were the last of the Schoolcraft family. Fifteen of them had been killed or carried into captivity within the space of seven years. Their fate and that of the Minears seemed connected. It is thought that the party that killed Jonathan Minear also killed Austin Schoolcraft and took prisoner his niece. Then, the band by which John Minear was killed, the next year, killed and captured three Schoolcrafts, making five in all that fell by the hands that slew the Minears.

After this depredation in Lewis County, the Indians passed over to the Valley River, in Barbour County; and a

ages started in pursnit, as confident of a speedy capture as those had been who followed Miller. But, in spite of their efforts to catch him, Goffe kept his distance. He looked back as he reached the river bank, and no Indians were in sight. He threw off his coat to swim, and leaped down the bank. But at that instant he heard his pursuers tearing through the brush almost immediately above him. He saw that it was impossible to escape by swimming; and, on the impulse of the moment, he pitched his coat in the water, and crept for concealment into an otter den which happened to be at hand.

By this time the Indians had reached the bank above him. He could hear them talking; and he learned from their conversation that they thought he had dived. They expected to see him rise from the water. He could see their images mirrored from the water of the river under him. He could see the glittering and glistening of their tomahawks and knives in the sunlight. His den was barely large enough to conceal him; and his tracks in the mud would lead to his hiding place. He prepared to plunge into the water and take his chances of escape by diving. But the Indians had caught sight of the coat as it was floating down the river; and they began to move off to keep pace with it. They supposed that Goffe was either drowned or had made his escape. They abandoned the man for the moment and turned their attention to saving the coat. How they succeeded in this is not known; for Goffe did not wait to see the termination of the affair. He crawled from his den and made off, leaving them a hundred yards below. He started directly for St. George, which he reached that night.

Severe as this blow was to the Cheat River settlement, it was probably lighter than it would have been, had not the

spot. Goffe and one of the Millers sprang from their horses and took to the woods. The other Miller was not unhorsed. He wheeled back, and fled toward Clarksburg. The savages tried hard to catch him; but his horse was fleetier than they, and he made good his flight to Clarksburg.

Miller sought to escape by ascending the hill. He was on foot, and two or three Indians started in pursuit, armed only with knives and tomahawks. He had the start of them by less than twenty yards, and they seemed confident of overhauling him. Indeed, he had little hope of escaping; but he considered it better to make an effort for his life. His pursuers, close upon his heels, called continually to him to stop, and told him if he did not, they would most certainly kill him. They accompanied their threats by the most violent gesticulations. Had they exerted all their energy in the pursuit and done less yelling, they might have sooner terminated the chase. As it was, Miller did not stop in compliance with their demand, although he almost despaired of being able to get away. The hill was steep, and his strength was nearly gone; but he struggled upward, reached the summit, turned down the other side, and was out of sight of the savages. But the chase was not done. The Indians followed fast after him, and he ran through the tangled brush, dodged to left and right, and finally avoided them. He knew not but that he was the only one who had escaped. He had seen the others fall, and thought them killed. But it was not entirely so.

While Miller was thus getting away from his pursuers by a long and desperate race, Goffe was making a still more wonderful escape. When he leaped from his horse, instead of going up the hill, as Miller had done, he broke through the line of foes and ran for the river. A score of the sav-

and Joseph Friend, voted to go on. Consequently, the whole party turned back.

But, the savages were not to escape thus. The settlements on the West Fork, about and above Clarksburg, were on the lookout for the marauders. Miller, who escaped when Minear, Cooper and Cameron were killed, had fled to Clarksburg, and had alarmed the country so that a close lookout was kept. Spies and scouts traversed the country looking for the enemy. At length, one of the spies discovered the Indians on West Fork, and Colonel William Lowther* collected a party of men and hurried to attack them. When he got to the place where the Indians had been seen, near the mouth of Isaac's Creek, they were gone. He followed after them, and overtook them on Indian Creek, a branch of Hughes' River, in Doddridge County. He came in sight of them awhile before night. It was thought best to wait till morning before making the attack. Accordingly, Elias and Jesse Hughes were left to watch the enemy, while Colonel Lowther led his men back a short distance to rest and get ready to fall upon the Indians at daybreak in the morning. Nothing of note occurred that night. The Indians did not discover their pursuers.

When the twittering of the birds announced that day was at hand, the whites began to prepare for the fight. They crawled forward as noiselessly as panthers, and lay close around the camp of the enemy. As soon as it was light enough to take aim, a general fire was poured into the midst of the savage encampment. Five fell dead. The others leaped up and yelled and darted off into the woods, leaving all their ammunition, plunder and all their guns, but one, in the camp. The whites rushed forward to beat down

* Colonel William Lowther was a relative of Rev. O. Lowther, well known in Tucker County.

attack been made on the party of land claimants. This band of Indians were heading for St. George; but, when Goffe and the Millers escaped, it was not deemed advisable to proceed, since the place could not be taken by surprise. Therefore, the Indians turned back up the Valley River to Tygart's Valley, where they fell upon settlements unprepared for them.

Leading Creek, in Randolph County, was then a flourishing colony. The people had heard of the presence of Indians in the more western counties, and were busily moving into the fort. While thus engaged, the savages fell upon them and nearly destroyed the whole settlement. Among those killed were Alexander Roney, two women, Mrs. Daugherty and Mrs. Hornbeck, and a family of children. They also took several prisoners, among whom were Mrs. Roney and Daniel Daugherty. Others of the settlement made their escape, and carried the news to Friend's fort. A company of men at once collected to hunt down the Indians and kill them. Col. Wilson led the pursuing party. When they reached Leading Creek they found the settlement broken up, the people gone and nearly all the houses and barns burned to the ground. The trail of the Indians was soon found, and a swift pursuit was made. The savages turned westward, and seemed to be aiming for the West Fork River. Colonel Wilson's party continued upon their track for some time, and until the men began to grow fearful that other Indians might fall upon the Tygart's Valley settlements, while thus deprived of so many of its men. Some wanted to go back, and only a few were very anxious to continue the pursuit of the Indians. A vote was taken to decide whether or not the party should proceed. Only four, Colonel Wilson, Richard Kittle, Alexander West

When the news of the massacre of Minear and his companions reached St. George, the excitement was little less than it had been when Jonathan Minear had been killed. The danger in the former case was more imminent than in the latter. But, the blow was heavier, and was more sensibly felt. The loss of John Minear, in particular, was irreparable. He was the central mind of the colony, and to him all looked for advice. It was on account of his superior business qualifications that he was sent to Clarksburg to attend to securing deeds for the lands.

As soon as it was known at St. George that he was killed, the settlers from the surrounding country collected and proceeded to the Valley River to bury the dead. The way thither was not free from danger. It was not then known where the Indians had gone, or whether they had gone. The settlers moved with the extremest caution, lest they should fall into an ambuscade. But, of course, there was no real danger of this, because the Indians were by that time on Leading Creek, in Randolph County. When the scene of the tragedy was reached, Minear, Cooper and Cameron were found dead where they fell. It was not a time for unnecessary display at the funeral. It was not known at what moment the Indians would be down upon them, and the funeral was as hasty and noiseless as possible. A shallow grave was dug on the spot, and the three men were consigned to it.

We carved not a line and we raised not a stone,
But we left him alone in his glory.

Not many years ago a party of road-workers accidentally exhumed the bones of the men. A very old man was present. He had been personally acquainted with them and identified them by their teeth. Two of Minear's front teeth

those who were trying to get away. It was then found that one of the whites, who had been taken prisoner in Tygart's Valley and was in the Indian camp, was killed. He had been shot by the whites who made the attack. They had been very careful to guard against such an occurrence. From the prisoners who were retaken, it was learned that a large band of Indians were near, and were expected to come up soon. On account of this, Colonel Lowther thought it best not to follow the fugitive Indians. He buried the prisoner whom his men had accidentally killed, and, with the guns and plunder of the enemy, he returned to the settlements, well satisfied that the Indians had not gotten off without something of merited punishment. The following account of the affair is from Withers' Border Warfare:

As soon as the fire was opened upon the Indians, Mrs. Roney (one of the prisoners) ran toward the whites rejoicing at the prospect of deliverance, and exclaiming: "I am Ellick Roney's wife, of the Valley, I am Ellick Roney's wife, of the Valley, and a pretty little woman, too, if I was well dressed." The poor woman, ignorant of the fact that her son was weltering in his gore, and forgetting for an instant that her husband had been so recently killed, seemed intent only on her own deliverance from the savage captors.

Another of the captives, Daniel Daugherty, being tied down and unable to move, was discovered by the whites as they rushed towards the camp. Fearing that he might be one of the enemy and do them some injury if they advanced, one of the men, stopping, demanded who he was. Benumbed by the cold and discomposed by the sudden firing of the whites, he could not render his Irish dialect intelligible to them. The white man raised his gun and directed it toward him, calling aloud, that if he did not make known who he was, he should blow a ball through him, let him be white man or Indian. Fear supplying him with energy, Daugherty exclaimed: "Lord Jasus! and am I to be killed by white pable at last?" He was heard by Colonel Wilson and his life saved.

CHAPTER III.

MISCELLANIES.

THE dwelling-houses of the first settlers of Tucker County differed somewhat from those of the present day. The hardy pioneers pushed into the wilderness with little of this world's goods. But, they possessed that greatest of fortunes, health, strength and honesty. They were poor; but the Czars of Russia or the Chams of Tartary, in their crystal palaces, were not richer. In that time, manners were not as they are now. Necessities were plentiful and luxuries were unknown, except such luxuries as nature bestowed gratuitously upon them.

To better their conditions, the people who came to Tucker had sold or left what possessions they may have had in the more thickly settled communities, and had plunged boldly into the wilderness to claim the rich gifts which an all-bountiful nature was offering to those who would reach forth their hands and take. Besides, there was something in the wild, free, unfettered life of the forest that was alluring to the restless spirits that breathed liberty from the air about them. The ties of society and the comforts of opulence were willingly exchanged for it.

The appearance and condition of the county when first visited by white men has been told in the first chapter. It was an unbroken forest. When those back-woodsmen left their homes in the more eastern settlements for Tucker, they did not have any roads over which to travel, nor any carts and wagons to haul their things on. They loaded

were missing at the time of his death. So were they in one of the skulls. Cameron used tobacco, and his teeth being worn, it was easy to tell which skull belonged to him. A peculiarity of teeth also distinguished Cooper. The bones were re-interred near by in a better grave.*

This was the last time the Indians ever invaded Tucker County, so far as is now known. The war against the Indians in this part lasted only about seven years, from 1774 to 1781. It raged nearly fifteen years longer about Clarksburg, Wheeling, and along the Ohio. But St. George was too far removed from the frontier to be open to attacks from the Indians.

* Conquest of the Ohio Valley, by Hu Maxwell.

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first having had bells put on them by which they might be found should they stroll away. Then with flint and steel a fire was kindled, and the movers fell to cooking their evening meal, consisting of bear's meat, venison and corn bread, if any bread at all. The meat was roasted on coals, or on a stick held to the fire. The bread was usually baked in an oven or skillet, which invariably had a piece broken out of it.* The wheaten bread was often baked in the ashes, and is said to have been excellent. The beds of that time, while traveling, were blankets and bear skins spread on the ground. They slept without a shelter, unless it threatened to rain. In that case, a rude shed was built of bark. In the morning bright and early they were up and on their way rejoicing, singing, laughing, joking and making their pilgrimage glad and merry as they went.

When they arrived at their place of destination, their first care was to build a house. This was done with the material at hand. The head of the family with two or three of his oldest boys, some of the neighbors, if any, with sharp axes and willing hands, went into the work. Logs were cut from twelve to twenty-five feet long. Sometimes the logs were hewn, but generally not. The ends were notched to fit one upon another; and the house was commonly one story high, but sometimes two, with a regular upstairs. The roof was of shingles four or five feet long, split from oak or chestnut, and unshaved. They were called clapboards. They were laid upon the lath and rafters so as to be water tight, and were held to their place by logs thrown across them. No nails were used.

It was the custom at that time to build the chimneys on the inside of the house. While the house was building, an

* Finley.

their plunder on pack-horses. They had not a great variety of wares to move. A few wooden or pewter utensils, a kettle, a jug or two, and a bottle, a scanty outfit of carpenter and cooper tools, and a little homespun clothing formed about all that the emigrant of that day carried with him, as he followed the star of empire westward. If he had a cow or two, and a calf, they were driven along before the pack-horses, and cropped weeds and leaves from the woods for a living during the journey. Indeed, the cattle lived upon this kind of feed principally for twenty-five years after reaching Cheat River. If the emigrant had children, and there usually were six or eight, they were gotten along in the best available manner. If one was quite small, its mother carried it in her arms; if a size larger, it with its older brother was placed on a pack-horse. Sometimes two baskets, tied together like saddle-pockets, were slung across the horse's bony back. Then a child was stowed away in each basket, so they would balance. Bed-clothes, iron-kettles, dough-trays and other household articles were stuffed around the edges to hold the little urchins steady. Thus loaded with packs and plunder, the procession moved on, the larger children taking it afoot to drive the cattle, lead the horses and make themselves useful generally. The road, if any at all, was narrow and rough; and the horses frequently scraped their loads off against overhanging trees; or perchance they lost their footing among the steep rocks, and fell floundering to the ground. In either case their loads of plunder, kettles, children and all went rolling, tumbling, rattling and laughing into the woods, creating a scene of ludicrous merriment.

At night, when it was necessary to halt, the horses were unloaded and turned loose to crop a supper in the woods,

ments were of linsey or of leather. The men nearly always wore leather breeches, and coats called *hunting shirts*. These coats were in fashion like the blue overcoats worn by the Union soldiers during the war. The edges and facing were decorated with a fringe, made by cutting the border into fine strings, leaving them hanging fast to the coat. They were frequently stained red, blue or some other color. A row of similar fringes extended from the top to the bottom of each leggin. The fastenings were either leather strings or big leaden buttons of home manufacture.

The moccasins were like those worn by the Indians, cut in one piece and closed by a seam on top. They had long flaps to the top, which were wound about the upper foot and ankle to keep out the briers of summer and the snow of winter. Those moccasins were a poor protection to the feet in wet weather. They were made of deer skin, and were flimsy and porous. In wet weather the feet of the wearer were constantly soaked. From that cause, the early settlers were subject to rheumatism, which was about their only disease. To dry their feet at night was their first care. Their moccasins were often decorated with fringes to match their other clothing. Stockings were seldom worn in the earliest times. Frequently, as a substitute for stockings, leaves were stuffed in the moccasins.

In winter, the people wore gloves, made of dressed deer skin, and decorated with a fringe of mink or weasel fur. In summer, no gloves were worn. The head-gear was a fur cap, made from the skin of a raccoon, otter or fox, with the hair-side out. The tail of a fox hung behind like a tassel.

The women dressed then as now, with the exception of a few bales of ribbon, a dozen hanks of superfluous lace, a yard of bonnet, and some other paraphernalia, best left un-

extra log was thrown across some six feet from the ground, and three feet from the end of the house. From this log to the roof, the flue was of sticks and mortar. The fire was directly beneath, and the smoke and sparks thus escaped through the wide opening of the chimney. Wood ten feet long could be thrown on the fire, and, when burnt off in the middle, the pieces were shoved together. The floors were of thick, rough wooden slabs; or often the ground was the floor. James Goff, although one of the richest men in the county, had a house with a ground floor. There were no windows. Small apertures through the wall served the double purpose of letting in the light and furnishing means of shooting at Indians when they should come near. There was seldom more than one door. It was made of heavy upright slabs, held together by transverse pieces. The whole was so thick that it was bullet-proof, or nearly so. In times of danger, it was secured by stout bars, fastened to the wall by iron staples on either side. The furniture of these normal dwellings was simple and sufficient. The beds were made of skins from forest animals, or of ticks filled with grass or straw. The bedsteads were rude frames, consisting of forks driven into the ground and poles laid across; or the bedding was on the ground or floor. An iron pot, the broken oven, a few wooden or pewter plates and cups, half dozen stools, a rough slab on pegs for a table, a shelf in the corner for a cupboard and pantry, and the furniture was complete.

When the first people came to Tucker, they had not the means of procuring fine clothes, and in consequence, their raiment was just such as they could get the easiest. Boots were not to be had, and they wore moccasins. Their under-clothing was of linen, at times of calico. Their outer gar-

ful, and might be had for the trouble of killing. Bear meat and venison were the chief dependence. It is a common saying among old people that the flesh of the bear was the bread, and venison was the meat. The venison was often cut into slices and dried. It would then keep well several months. Buffaloes were found in the earliest years of the St. George colony. But, they never were as plentiful as they were along the Ohio River, and about Charleston, Clarksburg and Buckhannon. Smaller game, such as raccoons, rabbits, pheasants and turkeys were, of course, plentiful. Salt was not often to be had, and it was thought no hardship to do without it. It cost a dollar a peck, and had to be carried seventy-five or one hundred miles. Besides, the dollar was not always at hand. Coffee and tea were unknown. Whiskey and brandy were in nearly every house.

Much is said of the quantities of intoxicating liquors that were drunk in early times, and of the scarcity of drunkards. This is a good subject for theories and speculations that would be out of place in a county history. Besides, Tucker County is not and never was a land of drunkards. Many of the people, let it be said to their praise and honor, have little idea of what a whiskey saloon is. The climate, habits and surroundings of the people are not such as produce drunkards. They work too hard, there are too few places for idle men to associate together.

It is hard to point out any particular harm in whiskey as long as it is used in its right place; although it is equally hard to tell what good there is in it. In early days, when whiskey and brandy were in every house, men seldom got drunk, because they always had their liquor at hand, and

mentioned. But, instead of alpaca and the finer cloths, the texture of their dresses was deer skin. Their other raiment was also deer skin, but sometimes rough woolen cloth, or tow linen, or at rare times cotton, was made a substitute. The children dressed as their parents. The men cropped their hair and shaved their beard about three times a year.

It might be asked what the early settlers in Tucker could find to eat before anything was raised. They were not here long before they raised enough corn for bread, and some potatoes, cabbage and other vegetables. They had an easier time than many of the other colonies in West Virginia. A mill was built at St. George in 1776.* This provided a means of getting the corn ground, and was an advantage not enjoyed by many early settlers. Often at that time the people had to go thirty or forty miles through the woods to mill; and, as this was such a hard undertaking, many preferred to do without bread, and eat hominy. Hominy was made by pounding corn just enough to mash the hulls off. Or, it was soaked in lye for the same purpose. Then it was cooked and eaten.

The settlers frequently ran short of bread. In that case they lived on meat. Fortunately, meat was always plenti-

* There was long a question as to where the mill stood. An old work, having the appearance of a mill-race, passes through the school-house lot in the town, and it was said that the mill was just below where the school-house stands. But this was disputed, and what was said by some to be an old mill-race, was claimed by others to be only an ancient channel of the creek. Thus the matter was unsettled for seventy-five years, and was well nigh forgotten. But, in 1875, a tremendous flood came down Mill Run and cleaned out a great bar of gravel that had accumulated in the creek bed. When the water had subsided, the timbers of the old dam were laid open to view. The gravel had been washed off of them. This settled the question that the trench through the school-house lot was indeed the mill-race. The old timbers of the dam are still to be seen protruding from the gravel on the east side of the creek. One hundred and eight years have had but little influence in causing them to decay, and they seem as solid, and the ax-marks are as plainly to be seen as when they had been there only a year or two. They are white oak, hewn square, and may be seen where the road leaves the water and passes up the eastern bank of Mill Run.

usual order was for some pious man to be chosen as class-leader; and all the other people who pretended to be religious would join in the exercise and help. Such meetings were generally held in each settlement once a month. The settlers, for ten miles on every side, would come together with devotional zeal, and sing and pray and exhort each other to live and work faithfully in the cause of the church, and against wickedness and sin.

No wagons or carriages were used. The people, who went to church, either rode on horseback or walked. They oftenest walked. Early on Sunday morning, especially in the spring and summer, the people from the forest cabins might be seen wending their way along the narrow roads toward the place appointed for the service. If the weather was fine, they went on foot. If they went on foot, they generally walked barefooted, carrying their moccasins in their hands. This was because they did not want to wear their shoes out with so much walking. A few ten-mile trips would put through a pair of moccasins; while the barefeet were not at all injured by the walk. No doubt, the pioneers enjoyed their Sunday pilgrimage to church. Young men and young lasses, who went the same road, found each other's company as agreeable then as young folks do now. They passed the time talking and singing until they came in sight of the meeting-house, when they stopped to put on their shoes.

The religious exercises of that day would look ridiculous to a city church member of the present time. But, "the groves were God's first temples," as it is said; and, before all temples, He doth "prefer the upright heart and pure," as Milton believed. So we must not judge others, nor prescribe forms and bounds for the manifestation of sacred

there was no excitement or novelty to lead them to excess, in which alone there is harm.

If half the creeks and springs of the county flowed apple brandy instead of water, they could not do the harm of twenty grog shops scattered over the county. It is not the taste of the liquor that so much intices men as it is the debauched pleasure which they feel in co-mingling with idlers. A man hardly ever gets drunk at home. The most effectual means of redeeming drunkards is to induce them to stay at home, and away from the places where men associate only with men. But, of this there is little need in Tucker County. Although it is one of the smallest in West Virginia, it is yet the most temperate. No county can claim pre-eminence in that respect over Tucker County.

It may not be amiss to say something of the arms used by the early colonists on Cheat River. The main dependence was the rifle. It was the surest means of defense and the most useful weapon. It furnished the settler with game and was a guard against the Indians. The rifle was a flint-lock, muzzle-loader. In addition to the rifle, a tomahawk and a knife were usually carried. These were about all the implements of war used in the early settlement of the country. Pistols were seldom used. The Indians used the same kind of arms that the white people used. But an Indian could not shoot as well, because Indians can not do anything as well as a white man can. They could not keep their guns in order, and they did not even have skill enough to take their guns apart and clean them properly.

During the first years of the county, there were no churches. Religious meetings were held in private houses. Once in a while, a minister visited the settlements and held a meeting; but, such meetings were not frequent. The

sidered it next to impossible for pupils to learn to write as well as he; and there was always room for a little more improvement. This manner of learning to write would be regarded somewhat antediluvian were it to be revived now; but the truth cannot be denied that those who were instructed in penmanship by following written copies wrote as well as those do now, who spend five years on Spencer's, Scribner's and the Eclectic printed plates.

Educational science has made wonderful strides forward during the last hundred years; and it is probable that no department of it will ever go back to what it was then. But, in a few particulars, the systems of the present day fail where those of earlier times succeeded. If the school children of to-day should attend school no more months than they did one hundred years ago, and receive the manner of instruction that they now get, at the end of their school life they would not be as well prepared for business as those of that time were. Of course, in a general sense, the educational systems of to-day are in advance of those one hundred years ago; but, in the particular subjects of writing, reading and spelling, the old plan accomplished the most in a limited time. The child of the present time goes to school nearly ten times as much as those did of a century ago; yet, is the child of to-day ten times as well educated? The great contention among modern educators is to find the natural method of imparting instruction. When one looks at the A. B. C. charts, costing ten or twenty dollars, over which the child pores for four or five months, varying the exercise by drawing pictures of boxes, flower-pots, bugs and birds, and similar tomfoolery, it is almost time to stop to ask if it is not possible to lose sight altogether of the so-called natural method of imparting instruction, and wander

devotion ; yet we may believe that, before Him who knoweth the secrets of all hearts, and who rewarded not him who prayed aloud in the synagogue for form's sake, the rude pioneers, in their sincerity and simplicity, were as acceptable as those are who kneel on velvet cushions and read prayers from Latin books. At any rate, we are not to ridicule the unlettered pioneers of the last century. They worshiped as they thought best, and as best they could. The rude log hut, where a dozen were met together to worship God according to the dictates of their conscience, was as sacred before Him as is St. Paul's or St. Peter's. If not, then religion is a fraud.

There were no schools in the earliest years of Tucker County. But as soon as the people were firmly settled, and could take their minds, for a moment, from the struggle for existence, the subject of education began to be agitated. At that time and in the remote frontiers, there was no public money for school purposes. Such schools as could be had were paid for from private pockets. The teachers, as might be supposed, were qualified to teach only the easiest branches. Arithmetic to decimal fractions, the spelling-book, the Testament for a reader, and the course of study was complete. No grammar, geography, or history was thought of. The teachers could not instruct in such difficult branches. The majority of the schoolmasters of that time did not believe that the earth was round. They usually taught writing. They set copies for the pupils to follow. They had no system of penmanship. When an apt scholar learned to write as well as the teacher, he was regarded perfect. However, this was seldom the case. The people held a schoolmaster in such esteem that they con-

an idea of the spirit of the time, and how the people then compare with those of the present time.

It seems that Manassa Minear, son of David Minear, and brother to Enoch Minear, of St. George, and to Mrs. Dr. Bonnifield, of Horse Shoe Run, had formed an attachment for Miss Lyda Holbert, a beautiful girl, who lived on the bank of Holbert Run, four miles east of St. George. A match between the young people was in no manner objectionable to the Minears, only that Manassa was so young. He was but eighteen; and Miss Holbert was sixteen.

Manassa fell into the habit of visiting his affianced rather oftener than his father thought necessary; and, the result was a rumpus in the Minear family, and Manassa was told to go a little less frequently. This did not discourage the young man in the least. The next Sunday there was singing-school in the Horse Shoe, and all the youngsters for miles around went as usual. Manassa and Lyda were there, and between them they made it up that he was to accompany her home. His brothers and sisters tried hard to persuade him not to go, as the old gentleman would certainly grumble. But, Manassa said, let him grumble, and went ahead. Lyda also said, let him grumble, and they two went off together, in company with the other young people who went that way. But, the rest of the Minears returned to St. George and reported what had taken place. Mr. Minear was much put out of humor, and after studying over the matter two or three hours, he decided to go in person and settle the matter.

Manassa and Lyda enjoyed the fine walk from the Horse Shoe to Holbert Run, about two miles. They had crossed the river at the Willow Point in a canoe; and, thence home, the path was a pleasant one. It lay across the wide bottom

off with those who spend their time and talents in telling or listening to something new.

The child probably learns as much by the time it is three years old—that is, learns as many things—as it does during any ten years of its after life. It has learned everything that it knows at three. It has learned to talk one language, and knows by sight several thousand things, and by name several hundred. All this was taught it by natural methods; because it was too young for artificial plans to be employed. But, from that time on, its education is more and more artificial, and is less and less rapidly acquired. Old theories, customs and plans must give way to the new, and it is right that it should be so; but it is meet that the new should be so constructed as to include all the good that there was in the old and something beside.

In early times, above and below St. George, the young people were accustomed to meet together on Sundays and have singing-school. The exercise had something of a religious nature, inasmuch as none but sacred songs were sung. It might be compared to a Sunday-school, except that no instruction in the Testament or catechism was given. The young folks met for the purpose of having a moral and social time, injurious to none, and pleasant to all. Much of these societies is remembered by the oldest inhabitants of the county; and, from all accounts, the exercises must have exerted a good influence over the community. Indeed, the singing-school is not yet a thing of the past, although it has changed some, probably for the better.

Incidentally connected with the singing-schools, about the commencement of the present century, there was a romance that at the time was the subject of much talk along the river, and in all parts of the county. It also gives us

fair an evening to terminate all, was truly delightful. But, it was not to be so. The evening which now looked so beautiful to the young couple, soon appeared to them the ugliest they had ever seen. For, presently foot steps were heard approaching, and when Manassa and Lyda looked up they saw the massive frame of David Minear coming up. Manassa's heart sank within him; for, he knew what was at hand. Lyda also looked scared. But, they said not a word, and the old gentleman walked boldly up and commenced flourishing a hickory withe, and uttered words to the effect that he wanted the young man home early enough Monday morning to go to hoeing potatoes when the other boys did. Manassa making no movement toward starting, the old gentleman with still more emphasis ordered him to "skedaddle for home." He realized his situation; and casting toward Lyda one look, which seemed to say, good-bye, for the present, and receiving one of sympathy from her, he bounded off down the hill, with the old gentleman at his heels wolloping him with the withe every jump. Poor Lyda felt for Manassa, but she could not reach him. She saw him dodging this way and that way to escape the thrashing, and saw him bound with extra buoyancy whenever an extra swoop fell upon his shoulders. She also heard some of the words which the old gentleman spoke, and they fell heavily upon her; for, he was telling Manassa that just as many jumps as it took him to get home, that many weeks it would be before he should come back. The young man apparently realized the force of the argument, and was trying to get to St. George with as few jumps as possible. Indeed, it looked to Lyda that he was going ten rods at a bound. All the while, the hickory was falling across his back with amazing rapidity. The scene was of short dura-

from the river to Low Gap, then all woods; and from the Low Gap home was about a mile, and this, too, was nearly all woods. No doubt, the walk of two miles on that fine June morning was a short one to them.

Tradition does not inform us how the day, from noon till evening was passed at the Holbert cabin; but circumstances justify us in supposing that all went merry and well. It could not have been otherwise; for, Manassa and Lyda could not quarrel, and the old folks were glad to have Manassa visit their daughter, for he belonged to one of the first families of the county and was, indeed, a promising young man. Be this as it may, he was there yet when the sun was just sinking behind Jonathan Point. He and Lyda were sitting alone in the yard, under a young walnut tree. The dead frame of this tree still stands, although it is a big one now. It might still be living but for a slight accident that happened it some seventeen years ago. Two boys, Henry Bonnifield, now of California, and Wilson Maxwell, of St. George, both little fellows then, tried to catch a red squirrel that was on the fence by the tree. Wilson had a hoe handle (they had been hoeing corn in a field hard by) and was trying his best to knock the squirrel as high as the Pyramids of Egypt. But, while going through gestures, and swinging the hoe-handle to give it all the force possible, he skinned his knuckles on the old walnut tree. This made him mad, and with an ax, which lay near, he deadened the tree, and it died. The squirrel, in the meantime, got away.

The sun was just setting; and, no doubt, the world looked beautiful to Manassa and Lyda as they sat under that little walnut tree, with none near enough to hear what they might say. The whole day had been pleasant; and, now so

On that morning, instead of crossing the river at the Horse Shoe Ford, as he should have done to have gone to the singing, he continued up the north bank, unobserved by his companions, who were some distance ahead of him. He was on horseback this time. He went directly to Holbert's and told Lyda to get on the horse behind him, and not to loose much time. He explained the nature of the case. She was a brave girl, and did not waste a moment in getting ready. Her brother caught the only horse belonging to the family, and was ready to accompany them. Lyda got on behind Manassa, and they were off for Maryland. It was not yet noon, but they did not wait for dinner. They knew that the Minears would follow them; and the success of the undertaking depended upon speed. They followed the little path leading up Horse Shoe Run. This they traveled seven miles, and then turned up Lead Mine, by the old trail marked out by Capt. James Parsons. Thus they reached Maryland, and were formally married.

When the young people who went to the singing returned to St. George, they reported that Manassa had not been there, nor Lyda either. It was at once suspected that he had gone to Holbert's, and David Minear followed again, determined to bring matters to a crisis. He went to Holbert's house, and not seeing Manassa, asked if he had been there. They answered him that he called a few minutes, but must be twenty miles away by that time. Holberts expected to see him fly into a passion at this disclosure; but they were disappointed. He questioned them closely about the matter, and when the young couple was expected back. When they had answered him, he said that if they were married, it was all right, as it was no use to make a fuss about it. He left an invitation for them to come down

tion ; for, while she was still silently sitting under the tree and looking toward them, they disappeared in the thicket, and, after a little ripping and tearing through the brush, all was still.

The scenes and conversations that followed at the Holbert cabin, as well as at Minear's, we can only imagine. But, the result of the whole affair might plainly have been foreseen. Thrashing the young man is not the proper way to break him from waiting upon the girl of his choice. So it proved in this case. Manassa resolved to marry the fair young Lyda, no matter who should oppose. She was as fully resolved to brave all opposition in her attachment for him. When two young people arrive at this conclusion, it is useless for relatives or any one else to interfere. Such opposition may delay but cannot prevent the final consummation of the lovers' plans. In this case, however, the Holbert family did all they could to assist the young couple, so the opposition was all on one side.

Manassa and Lyda laid plans to elope and get married. But David Minear knew nothing of it. He supposed that the thrashing had broken up the affair, and that Manassa would pursue his foolish course no further.

It was again on Sunday, and the young people of St. George started to the singing-school in the Horse Shoe. Manassa Minear started with the others ; but he had no intention of the singing. It was now in the fall of the year. His course of love, since it had been interrupted on that summer evening, had not run as smoothly as a poetical river. However, he had managed to see Lyda in the meantime, and had arranged it with her and the rest of the family that she should elope with him at any time he should call for her.

CHAPTER IV.

MISCELLANIES.

THE material for a chapter on the history of Tucker County for two score years next following the close of the Indian troubles, in 1781, is meager in the extreme. Almost nothing at all, of an exciting nature, is left on record. The Indian wars were at an end, and no massacres or exploits or adventures are to be narrated. It was a silent epoch in our history. But, as Carlyle teaches, these silent periods in the history of a people are the most prolific of great things. It is a time when everything is building. Every man is attending to his own work. No great interference disturbs the welfare of all. The whole country is thriving together, and there is no jar or collision to attract attention. It is not the building up but the tearing down that constitutes the violent crashes in a people's annals. It has been represented similar to a tree that grows noiselessly for a thousand years; but, when the whirlwind overthrows it, it falls with a crash. Thus a nation grows and grows for ages, and if everything is prosperous, not a discord tells of existence. But, when commotions or rebellions overthrow it, the fall is heard.

To Macedon and Artaxerxes' throne.

But, this digression is out of place in a county history. However, this book is not meant to be a history of Tucker County. It is designed only as a series of annals, and is not intended to be a complete history. But, while this is the case, nothing on the subject, deemed worthy to be remem-

as soon as they returned, and with this he went home. They were entirely successful, and got safely home the third day.

If the memories of old people are to be credited in the matter, the young couple did not find the course of married life as poetical as they had expected. For, though Lyda was young, she had a great deal of industry about her, and she made Manassa work harder than he wanted to, and he got tired of it, and, to keep from hoeing in the truck-patch, he dug a hole under the fence in a weedy corner and toled the hogs in. This did not mend matters much, for Lyda found it out, and made him build new fences around every lot on the place; and, besides, made him build a pen for the hogs, and then pull weeds all summer to feed them.

from our valleys and hills; who planted our orchards; who built our churches and school-houses; who made our roads; who improved the morals and intelligence of the country by their examples of honesty and industry; who were ever ready to lend a helping hand to the unfortunate; who never hung back when a good cause needed friends; who did to others as they wished others to do to them—these are our great men. Such are always great; and Tucker, though hemmed in by mountains and nearly excluded from other parts of the world, has now, and has had from the first, just such men. They are found everywhere upon her hills and in her valleys. They are not all rich in this world's goods; but none of them are too poor to be honest. They have not all held office; they have not all fought battles; they have not all seen distant countries; but they have all been upright citizens, and have done well what they have done.

Tucker County likewise has had and still has men who have taken an active part in our wars, and in our times of danger, were ever in the front. The history of James Parsons and John Minear has been given. Since their day there have been others none the less worthy to be remembered.

During the civil war the straggle was intense and bitter in this county. The two parties, north and south, were nearly equal. The mountains and fastnesses were the rendezvous for scouts and sharpshooters. The history of the war, as it influenced this section of the county, will be given at some length further on. No sides will be taken in writing on that subject. Some of our best citizens took the side of the South, and others equally good espoused the cause of the North. The men who thus arrayed themselves against each other in that deadly strife, were honest and

bered, will be left untold. There is little material, of the nature of Acts of the Legislature and railroad and turn-pike meetings and resolutions, from which to fill a book. But, if there were tons of such, they would be given very little attention by the writer of these pages. Tucker County has never had any great movements on these subjects. All of importance that the Legislature has ever done for Tucker can be told in ten lines. The reports of road surveys, and the meetings consequent thereon, can be dismissed with still less attention. Therefore, another class of material must be had. The people of our county do not care about the proceedings of Congress and the Legislature in matters now forgotten, that never were of much importance and are now of none. This is, at best, a dry subject to all, except a very few, who, for some special reason, are interested therein.

But Tucker County possesses exhaustless stores of matter that is of interest to her people. It is the biography of her people; an account of what the people have done. Each man has done something, or said something, or tried to do something that his friends and neighbors would like to know. Of course, every man cannot be represented in a book of this size. Many who deserve a history must be left out, because there is not room for all. It is a hard thing to decide who shall be made the leading spirits for the hundred years after the close of the Indian wars to the present time. Before that, Capt. James Parsons and John Minear were clearly the most prominent men. But, since then, there are a few individuals around whom the history of the county seems to cluster.

Those who have fought the most battles are not necessarily the greatest men. The laborers who dug out the grubs

owned the greater portion of the land from the Minear claim to Rowlesburg. He worked incessantly on his farms, and always had corn to sell. His price was fifty cents a bushel; and, no matter what other people sold at, he would take nothing more or less than his price. His house had no floor, except the ground. They ate bread and meat at his house. This diet was unvaried, except when a pot of "greens"—a dish of some plant cooked—was substituted for meat; or a kettle of corn meal mush took the place of bread. All were welcome to the hospitalities of his cabin, although a stranger might have thought the family rough in manners. They did not mean to be rude. They were open in their actions. Indeed, the eastern land agent, who stopped there over night, must have thought so. He sat by the fire talking and wondering where supper was coming from. He could see no preparations for the evening meal, except a big pot at one end of the fireplace, where Mrs. Goff sat stirring the kettle's contents. At length it was carried to the central part of the floor, and a gourd of milk was emptied into it, and a dozen wooden spoons were provided.

While the hungry stranger was watching these proceedings, and wondering what the sequence would be, Mrs. Goff announced that supper was ready. Mr. Goff sat a moment and then dragged his stool up to the mush-pot, saying to the visitor: "Well, if you don't want any supper, you can sit there." The children were already around the kettle, scooping out the mush and milk with the large wooden spoons, and seeming to enter with gusto into the repast. Mr. and Mrs. Goff joined the circle; and all fell to eating with such voracity that no time was left for asking or answering questions. No cups or dishes were used. All ate

conscientious in what they did. They upheld and fought for what they belived to be right. When a man risks his life for a cause, he believes that the cause is right. This must not be questioned. Some of our brave men joined the Federal armies, and some the Confederate. Honor to the blue and gray. The storm is now passed beyond the horizon; and, there is no occasion to recall those dark and bloody times except to show that we had men then who did not shrink from duty. Such men as Dr. Solomon Parsons stood up for the Union; and such as Dr. E. Harper cast the fortunes into the cause of Confederacy. Both, and all like them, deserve a place in our county's history, no matter whether they loved the stars and stripes or stars and bars. But, this will come in at the proper time and place.

When the Indian trouble ended, about 1781, our county had only a few people. The settlement did not extend far from the river. The people worked hard, and took few holidays. They had to earn their bread by the sweat of their brows, and no time was allowed for idleness. The heavy timber was removed from it only by excessive labor. The farmers worked in their clearings during the late fall, the winter and the early spring. When summer came they were employed in raising their crop of corn. The people generally ate corn bread. Wheat was nearly unknown in the early years. A portion of the autumn was often spent by the men in hunting deer and bear.

It is difficult to give particulars of individuals who lived in the county in the latter part of the last century and the first of this. Some are remembered; but little more than their names come down to us. James Goff seems to have been one of the leading men in early times. He lived on Cheat River, near the Preston County line, and at one time

The land which Goff settled upon had previously been occupied by a man named Jorden. It is not known when Jorden left it or when Goff purchased it. But, Goff was there in 1786. He was an untiring worker; and, old men still remember how he made his boys work. In the long days of June, when daylight comes at four, he would be in the corn-field before the first gleam of dawn. He never called his boys to work, nor even waked them; but, if any one was not in the field as soon as it was light enough to distinguish weeds from corn, that one got a sound thrashing.

Of course, by working so hard he made money. What he made he saved. He would not spend a cent for anything, unless it was absolutely necessary. He kept his cash in a buck-skin sack, and buried it in one corner of the dirt floor. In the course of time, he came to be a considerable money-lender. Those who came to borrow often marked with surprise that he picked up a handspike which was used as a poker, and dug deep into the ground-floor, and turned out the foul sack, filled with silver and gold.

When James Parsons had obtained deeds for his lands in the Horse Shoe, he divided them among his three sons—Isaac, Solomon and Jonathan. Isaac lived where Joseph Parsons, Esq., now resides. The farm now owned by Mr. S. B. Wamsley, was given to Jonathan; and Hon. S. E. Parsons now owns the farm that was allotted to Solomon.

Thomas Parsons, brother of James Parsons, and partner with him when they first purchased their lands, divided his lands among his four sons—William, James, Isaac and George. The descendants of these, as well as those of James Parsons, still reside on these farms. Nicholas and George Parsons, still living, are the sons of Isaac, and grandsons of Thomas. The late W. R. Parsons, and An-

directly from the pot, and there was no little crowding from those who feared that they might not get their full share.

The stranger got no other invitation to eat; but, by this time, he had come to see that he would get no supper unless he should go boldly forward, seize a spoon and take his chances with the rest. This he did. He pulled his stool forward and commenced eating. Mr. Goff crowded a little to one side, remarking with an oath: "By —, I thought you'd come to it." The meal passed without further incident, and the next morning the land agent fled back to Winchester with a story that no one there believed.

That same year there was a scarcity in the country. Goff had corn, but hardly anybody else had. People came from all parts to buy from him. Two young men came down from the Glades in Maryland. One had been there before; but the other had not. The one who had been there entertained the other, while on the road, by picturing to him what a grand residence Goff's was, and admonished him not to show himself ill-bred by undue staring about the pictured walls and carpeted floors. By the time they drew near the plantation, the young man, who had believed all that his companion had told him, was looking for a splendid residence, and picturesque surroundings. Mark his surprise when he came suddenly up to the front, and only, door of the log cabin. He was immediately ushered in at the opening. He was looking so wildly about him that he did not notice the log that formed the door-sill; and, stumbling over it, he fell headlong into the house. Instead of landing upon Brussels carpet, as he might have expected, he found himself sprawling in the dust and ashes of the earth-floor. Not till then did he realize that he had been made the subject of a practical joke.

field homestead. Whether they owned the land or not is unknown. At any rate, they were engaged in cultivating tobacco there; and, there in 1752, Samuel Bonniſfield was born. His father's name was Gregory, and his grandfather's was Luke.* Nothing of note occurred in Samuel's life until he was moved to ramble, and left his paternal roof. The next heard of him was in the summer of 1774. He was then in Fauquier County, Virginia.

It was in that year that there broke out a trouble with the Indians, called Dunmore's War. The Indians commenced killing people along the frontiers. The only settlement in Tucker, that in the Horse Shoe, was broken up. The Governor of Virginia, Lord Dunmore, decided to raise an army, march into the Indian country of Ohio, and burn all the Indian towns, so that these hives from which the savages swarmed, might be destroyed. Gen. Andrew Lewis and Governor Dunmore each was to raise an army and

* While searching for other historical matter, at Brownsville, Ohio, in the spring of 1884, I happened upon an old legend of the Bonniſfield family, a little different from that of the Tucker County family. It is certain that the Bonniſfields there and those in Tucker, Preston and in the West, all belong to the same stock, and I am inclined to credit the Ohio legend, which narrates the first coming of the Bonniſfields to America. The story runneth thus: Very early in the history of America, probably about the close of the 15th century, three brothers named Bonniſfield became desirous of leaving England for America. They belonged to the poor class, although intelligent, and had not money to pay their passage to our shores. At that time, it was a custom among those who had no money and who wanted to emigrate to the New World, to sell themselves or mortgage themselves to the master of some vessel. He would then bring them over, and sell his claim upon them for enough cash in hand to pay him for their passage. The emigrants were then bound in servitude to the purchaser until their wages amounted to the sum paid the master of the vessel. After that they were free.

The three Bonniſfield brothers came to America in that manner, and were sold in Baltimore. One was carried to Virginia, one to Maryland and the third was purchased by a speculator and was taken to Florida. Those in Maryland and Virginia each had a family, and the families are still distinguished apart, and are nearly equal in the number of representatives; but of him who went to Florida no tidings has ever been heard. Whether he died a victim to the fevers of that sultry land, or whether in the wars of the Spanish, French and Indians he was killed, or, whether his family is now blended with the population of Florida, is unknown. All the Bonniſfields in America, so far as is known, are the descendants of the two brothers who settled in Virginia and Maryland. Samuel Bonniſfield belonged to the Maryland family, and those in Ohio about Zanesville and Brownsville to the Virginia family.

drew and Abraham Parsons, now of California, are sons of James Parsons. Job Parsons, and Solomon Parsons were sons of William Parsons.

The lands along the river, above St. George, have ever since their first settlement been in the Parsons family. This is the finest agricultural land in the county; and those who have owned it have always belonged to the wealthy class of our citizens. They have held nearly half the offices in the county. They are not and never were all of one political party. They have usually been nearly equally divided. Generally speaking, James Parsons' descendants have leant toward the Whig and Republican parties; while those of Thomas voted the opposite ticket. At present, altogether, there are more Democrats than Republicans. Judge S. E. Parsons first voted in 1859, and cast his ballot for the Whigs. Since then he has voted with the Democrats, and has always been a strong Union man. The others of his immediate relatives have not supported the Democratic ticket; but nearly all the others of the name, including Joseph, Ward and Jesse Parsons, are Democrats.

The Bonnifield family came into notice very early in the history of Tucker, though not so early as those of Parsons and Minear. The first of that name in the county was Samuel Bonnifield. He came to the Horse Shoe from Eastern Virginia sometime before the commencement of the present century. Not much is known of his ancestry, except that they were of French extraction. The name in that country was Bonnifant; but, being Anglicized, it was as it now is. There are still different spellings for it. Representatives of the family spell it Bonafield, as those in Preston County. Others drop an "n" from it.

Where Washington City now stands was the old Bonni-



MRS DR BONFIELD



DR A. BONFIELD



MRS ENOCH MINEAR



ENOCH MINEAR

proceed to the mouth of the Great Kanawha, where they would unite and invade the Indian country. Dunmore collected his troops in the northern part of Virginia, while Lewis enlisted his from counties further south.

When Samuel Bonnifield reached Fauquier County, he found the most ambitious young men enlisting in Lewis' Army. Although young Bonnifield was not a citizen of Virginia and had never seen war, yet he was no less ambitious and no less adventurous than the young soldiers of Virginia; and, he applied and obtained a place in the ranks as a common soldier.

The army marched to Camp Union, now Lewisburg, Greenbrier County, where it was joined by fifty men, under Even Shelby, who had come all the way from North Carolina to fight in the war. General Isaac Shelby, the Governor of Kentucky and Secretary of War, was also in the army, and with him Bonnifield formed an intimate acquaintance.* From Lewisburg, the army proceeded to Point Pleasant. Some went on foot, and some made canoes at the mouth of the Gauley River and floated down the Kanawha to the Ohio. Bonnifield was among the latter.

On the evening of October 9, eleven hundred men were encamped at Point Pleasant. That evening a large Indian army crossed the Ohio not far above, and lay hid in the woods, while some of the Indians gobbled like turkeys to decoy the soldiers from camp. The plan succeeded; and, before day the next morning, some men went out to shoot the turkeys. But, instead of turkeys, they found Indians, and only one man got away. He ran back to camp and

* Evan Shelby was the father of Isaac Shelby, and was a great fighter. In General Forbes' campaign against Fort Duquesne, he found an Indian spy sneaking around the camp, and immediately gave chase to the rascal. The Indian ran for his life, but Shelby caught and killed him.

said that he had seen three hundred thousand Indians; but it is now thought that his estimate was three hundred times too large.

In a few minutes the battle commenced, and was fought hard all day. Bonnifield and Isaac Shelby fought side by side, and at least one Indian, who kept bobbing his head up from behind a log, got his eternal quietus from their rifles. The Indians and white men fought behind trees and logs, and it was the hardest and longest contested battle ever fought with the Indians in America. But about sunset the Indians found themselves grievously set upon by three hundred soldiers who had crept through the weeds and got in their rear. The whole Indian army fled, yelling and screaming. Bonnifield and some others ran after them and saw them crossing the Ohio on logs and rafts. In this they were not succeeding well; for the logs kept rolling so that they all fell off into the water and had to swim out.

The Virginian army crossed into Ohio and hurried on to help kill the Indians and burn the towns on the Scioto, where Dunmore, who had crossed the Ohio at Parkersburg, then was. The Indians were so badly whipped that they made peace without any more fighting. The Virginians lost one-fifth of their men in killed and wounded. The dead were buried, and the wounded were left in care of a company of soldiers. Bonnifield was among those who took care of the wounded. He staid there all winter; and when he was discharged in the spring, he and a companion started home alone. They failed to kill any game, and came near starving to death. While wandering about in Greecubrier County, they came to a house where lived a man named McClung, and whose descendants still live there. He gave the famished soldiers all they wanted, but stood by them to keep them from eating themselves to death.

his clothing was drenched from having waded creeks and runs all day. He was small in stature; but his strength seemed exhaustless. He died at the age of ninety-five, and was buried on Graveyard Hill, near the present residence of Dr. Bonnifield, on Horse Shoe Run.

The descendants of some of his relations subsequently found their way into Tucker County; but none are there now, all having emigrated to the West.

Dr. Arnold Bonnifield, a son of Sammel Bonnifield, has always been a citizen of the county, and is now its oldest resident, with the exception of George Long, of Dry Fork. He was concerned in all the early history of the county, after he became a man, until of late years. He was the first clerk of the circuit and county courts of Tucker County.

But his greatest influence has not been as a politician or soldier, but as a social reformer. From his earliest years, he showed a strong desire to become a scholar; but, during his early years, hard work and few advantages made it a hard thing for him to pursue his studies. Mathematics was his favorite science; and he became master of all the branches of it, except the higher departments of the calculus. The greater part of this was attained without the use of books; for a rude edition of arithmetic, and a few leaves of algebra and geometry, were about all the instruction he had until his twenty-fourth year, when he attended a few sessions of school at Clarksburg.

While a boy, he was accustomed to solve his problems and demonstrate his theorems on a smooth stone, using a gravel for a pencil. In this manner he gained the greater part of his mathematical education. His early life was spent on his father's farm at Limestone, where he worked